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A wise discrimination

The Bohlen Lectures, 1881

A WISE DISCRIMINATION

THE CHURCH'S NEED

BY

THOMAS UNDERWOOD DUDLEY, D.D.

ASSISTANT-BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF KENTUCKY

DELIVERED IN THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, PHILADELPHIA, IN FEBRUARY, 1881

NEW YORK
THOMAS WHITTAKER
2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE
1881

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The John Bohlen Lectureship.

John Bohlen, who died in this city on the 26th day of April, 1874, bequeathed to trustees a fund of One Hundred Thousand Dollars, to be distributed to religious and charitable objects in accordance with the well-known wishes of the testator.

By a deed of trust, executed June 2, 1875, the trustees, under the will of Mr. Bohlen, transferred and paid over to "The Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia," in trust, a sum of money for certain designated purposes, out of which fund the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars was set apart for the endowment of The John Bohlen Lectureship, upon the following terms and conditions:

"The money shall be invested in good substantial and safe securities, and held in trust for a fund to be called The John Bohlen Lectureship, and the income shall be applied annually to the payment of a qualified person, whether clergyman or layman, for the delivery and publication of at least one hundred copies of two or more lecture sermons. These lectures shall be delivered at such time and place, in the city of Philadelphia, as the

persons nominated to appoint the lecturer shall from time to time determine, giving at least six months' notice to the person appointed to deliver the same, when the same may conveniently be done, and in no case selecting the same person as lecturer a second time within a period of five years. The payment shall be made to said lecturer, after the lectures have been printed and received by the trustees, of all the income for the year derived from said fund, after defraying the expense of printing the lectures and the other incidental expenses attending the same.

"The subject of such lectures shall be such as is within the terms set forth in the will of the Rev. John Bampton, for the delivery of what are known as the 'Bampton Lectures,' at Oxford, or any other subject distinctively connected with or relating to the Christian Religion.

"The lecturer shall be appointed annually in the month of May, or as soon thereafter as can conveniently be done, by the persons who for the time being shall hold the offices of Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese in which is the Church of the Holy Trinity; the Rector of said Church; the Professor of Biblical Learning, the Professor of Systematic Divinity, and the Professor of Ecclesiastical History, in the Divinity School of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

"In case either of said offices are vacant, the others may nominate the lecturer."

Under this trust the Right Reverend THOMAS UNDERWOOD DUDLEY, D.D., Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Kentucky, was appointed to deliver the lectures for the year 1881.

PHILADELPHIA, SEPTUAGESIMA, 1881.

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LECTURE I.

Discrimination as to Dogma.

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LECTURE I.

DISCRIMINATION AS TO DOGMA.

". . . if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."—ROMANS 10 : 9.

I AM asked to deliver a course of lectures designed to "confirm and establish the Christian Faith." May I be pardoned that I add, I feel myself to be summoned by the voice of him who years ago welcomed me, a stranger, a novice, a beggar for help to preach this same faith in a war-desolated region, and sent me on my way rejoicing in the gift he had bestowed, as in the hearty God-speed he had spoken? I come that by my voice he, being dead, may yet speak. I pray that the true light in which he now stands may illumine my mind, that I may know what things I ought to speak, and that the grace of Him to Whom he is gone may make me bold that, in plain, unmistakable words, I may testify that I have learned.

As I begin to write there rises straightway the thought of the contrast between the teaching of the men who were "eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word," and of those who now for a thousand years past have sat in their seats as "leaders and commanders to the people."

Among the documents of the faith, the written memorials of the things to be believed, I lay my hand upon that "triumphant pæan"* of orthodoxy which the mighty name of the conqueror at Nicæa protected from the anathema of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. It is nearly two hundred years since scholars abandoned the hypothesis that this Symbol could lay claim to the name of the "Father of Orthodoxy"; and yet to-day its metaphysical subtleties, its abstruse definitions are to a multitude the normal expression of the true catholic faith; and until now in our mother Church of England the thunder tones of its "everlasting no," its proclamation of

* Dean Stanley, quoted by Schaff, "History of Creeds," vol. i. p. 35.

despair, still reverberate with discordant roar through the "long-drawn aisles" where sounds the pealing anthem of hope. And alas! even in our day and in our own household is heard the suggestion that we shall seek to bind the limbs of our countrymen with these cords of dogma; that we too shall pronounce anathema against misbelief, and give assurance of salvation to correctness of opinion.

"The catholic faith is this": the Pseudo-Athanasius cries—even a logical definition of the nature of the infinite and incomprehensible Godhead—"which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Ah! how like a breeze of pure air from far-away mountains comes to the spirit, fast bound and imprisoned within these walls of scholastic speculative dogmatism, this writing which Phœbe the widow has brought from the tent-maker at Corinth to the handful of Christians at Rome! Therein he has written words hard to be understood; yes, therein he attains to such height of argument as uninspired intellect can never

reach. He looks with open eyes through the blue veil which hides the Omnipotent ; he is caught up into "the third heaven" to behold things which cannot be uttered in human language. Thus instructed he writes for all the men of all time, "the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest." But, mark you, there is no judgment of exclusion from the hope of heaven pronounced against all who cannot accept even these apostolic definitions, "whole and undefiled" ; and the very climax and conclusion of the whole system is the words I have read as the motto of our lecture. St. Paul, too, says : "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith" . . . "and the catholic faith is this" : "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Again, I take my place among that motley multitude which crowds Jerusalem at the Pentecost, and listen to the first Christian ser-

mon which the world ever heard. Simon Peter is the preacher, the man who once leaped into the sea to come to his Master ; who afterward turned coward at the question of a little servant-girl in the palace of the high priest, and denied that Master, as He had foretold. But he is the man to whom was given the personal and peculiar warrant of apostolic power ; to whom was sent the special message from the opened sepulchre ; and he is the man into whose heart thrice went the probing question, "Lovest thou Me?" Always first named in the chosen company of witnesses, he first makes proclamation of the message, he first opens the door of the kingdom, to both Jew and Gentile. Does he not know what is the Gospel he is sent to preach? Hear him : He justifies the extraordinary multiform utterances of his fellows on the ground that the prediction of Joel is fulfilled and the Spirit is outpoured in visions to the young, and dreams to the old, and in prophecies to their sons and daughters ; these wonders and signs in heaven and earth do herald the day of the Lord, on Whom whoso-

ever should call should be saved. Then mark what follows: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it."* Hebrew prophecy is again summoned—for remember he is speaking to the sons of Abraham—to justify expectation of the resurrection, and the preacher adds: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Therefore," he adds—grand, all-satisfying, all-demanding conclusion!—"Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that

* Acts 2.

God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

This is Apostolic preaching, even this : God hath raised His Son from the dead, and therefore the Holy Ghost, the illuminating, the convincing, the enabling Spirit, He is come to all who hear this word. Therefore—mark it—*therefore* "repent," says the preacher ; "repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

How much did they know of what, in the language of our popular theology, is called "the plan of salvation"—these men and women who crowded the way to the water of baptism ? Could not any child of our Sunday-schools have puzzled them with questions to which he could give accurate reply ? They believed what ? That Jesus was the Christ ; that God the Father had raised His Son from the dead ; that the Holy Spirit was given ; and believing this they were baptized into the hope and covenant of salvation.

How unlike this to much of the discourse now heard from the pulpits of the Christian Church ! Polished complexity is come into the room of the rugged simplicity of the beginning ; ingenious speculations are offered in place of the inexplicable realities ; and the acceptance of a system of dogma, the assertion of a stereotyped experience, the understanding and approval of an Ecclesiastical Order, the renunciation of a catalogued series of arbitrarily selected indulgences—all these are demanded as the password at the gate of the pilgrim pathway, though there is written above it in letters large and plain : " If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Again, I remember that " the beloved physician" writes to Theophilus that the occasion of the history which he had " taken in hand " is that he might " know the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed," or catechised. Of what things had been the questions and answers in the assembly, of which

the youth had been one, when on the first day of the week they met where "the doors were shut for fear of the Jews"? The nature of the Godhead? He has heard how that Jesus declared that Jehovah, the Lord God, is *One*, that this God is His *own* Father, and that He and His Father are One. He has heard how Jesus said that the Holy Ghost should teach His servants what they "ought to say" in the hour of danger and of trial, and how He proclaimed the awful majesty of that God-Spirit by the denial of possible forgiveness of blasphemy against Him. And He has heard of the parting commandment to His disciples, that they baptize men into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. What more? He has learned that the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and that by His lifting up He would draw all men unto Him that they might be saved from the evil in the world. Code of morality? He has heard that the Spirit of Jesus is spirit of love to God and man, and is the fulfilling of the law; for it is at once all-embracing commandment and all-powerful

motive. In a word, he has been taught the events of that marvellous life which had been born at Bethlehem, and was now gone away to the highest heavens ; and that to know Him and to confess Him—confess with the mouth and receive into the heart—was salvation from the evil. Decrees of God ! He had heard of them only in their fulfilment. The Father loved the world, and gave His only begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Sacraments, their nature and efficacy? The very word was not yet coined, but he knew that with washing of water must there be confession of the Lord, and that with bread and wine must Memorial be made of that death which is his life.

How simple had been his instruction ! He learned the facts of Jesus' life, the plainest promises He had spoken. *Now* there is the very embarrassment of riches in the selection of the instruction-book for the catechumen, and the learner of the lesson of salvation must often begin afar back in the eternity of the

past, with speculations about the economy of the Divine government, and his course extend to as minute speculations of that which shall be the final outcome of that government's rule. In the midst shall be theories upon theories, of inspiration, of incarnation, of atonement, of grace ; until our Theophilus, alas ! is bewildered by the much learning into practical forgetfulness of the Life that was manifested to be the Light of men, and of the *fact* that He was born, and died, and rose again, and that whosoever shall confess Him with his mouth, and believe in his heart,—*mark you, in his heart*—that He has brought with Him from the grave a never-dying life, shall share that risen life, and in its power be saved from sin which is death.

I believe, men and brethren, that herein is one largest part of the hindrance to the progress of the religion of Jesus Christ among men ; that herein is at least partial explanation of the fact that it must be defended from assault ; and of the further sadder fact that in our day "the enemy cometh on so fast" that the Church beginneth to be afraid, and to speak

coward words of unbelief; namely, that by Christian teachers so much of mere theological opinion is mingled with the essential truth as it is in Jesus; that so much of theory is blended with the proclamation of the perhaps inexplicable facts it would explain; that so many questions of theology, of morality, and even of philosophy and of history, are made to appear as part of the Christian religion, and upon their settlement one way or another is made to depend the correctness, the reality, the "soundness," as it is called, of our Christian belief; nay, that, seemingly but too often, Christianity is made to stand or fall with them. And so the men who cannot accept our philosophy—be it physical, metaphysical, or historical—are driven away from the confession of the divine fact, and are shut out from the home of hope. A great company of them, which no man can number, as I think (for how can I help so thinking when I listen to the words of the Master, and remember the convincing power of the Holy Ghost, and the constraining power of the love of Christ?), do be-

lieve in the heart that God hath raised Jesus from the dead, and in the new hope born of that resurrection, and by the grace of His Spirit do confess Him, though not with the mouth, and do follow Him, while they strive after the things that are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report. But they come not into any organized division of the Christian host ; they give not the help which we so much need, and which it is their bounden duty to bestow ; they receive not the visible pledge, the covenant seal, their hearts cannot but desire ; and the Church is clamorous with the questions, " Why do not *men* come forward to confess Christ," and " How shall we reach the masses ?" Answers multiform are spoken in reply. I answer that which I believe, that undue development of Christian dogma, unwise statement of Christian evidences, unwarranted demand of belief and practice, are perhaps largest factors in the solution of our problem. Our systems of doctrine, builded by our fathers, the champions of the faith in their generation, have become at too many points

but obstacles to the approach of our friends and countrymen ; for the fast-flowing river of unbelief has in its furious course cut out a new channel, and left our levees to separate us only from the land where dwell our kinsfolk. We have forgotten that theological statement must always have closest relation to the philosophy of the age ; we have forgotten that no logically formulated system of dogma, that no marshalled array of evidence is of divine origin, and therefore of universal and eternal value ; we have forgotten what the Laureate sings :

> " Our little systems have their day,
> They have their day and cease to be :
> They are but broken lights of Thee,
> And Thou O Lord art more than they."

And therefore a multitude of men, recalcitrant against our inferences, refuse to confess the facts from which we will consent that no other deduction may come.

Doubtless the progress of theological development was an inevitable result of the reception of the facts of the Gospel by the human intellect. The fantastic dreamings of that

Jewish-Gentile gnosis which St. Paul condemns are but the natural consequence of bringing together the revelation of the Christ and their Oriental theosophy ; and the definitions of the false Athanasius, the Westminister Confession, the decrees of the Council of Trent, the Thirty-nine Articles, are all, it seems to me, the no less natural effort to express the traditional aspect of the eternal realities agreeably to the philosophic conception of the day, and in the language of the different schools.

Just as natural, perhaps just as inevitable, has been the consequent division of the Christian Church into schools of thought, and then its disruption into rival sects. I shall not call the roll of the contending legions which in this our own land march all under the same banner, and yet whose unseemly rivalries and unbrotherly dissensions so much disfigure the glory of the one Leader, to Whom all alike have sworn the soldier's oath of allegiance. The divisions at Corinth, which the name of the greatest of all Apostles was employed to foster, have but repeated themselves until now,

when, alas! all the passages of the Jordan which separates the world from the Church, which flows as protection about the city of our refuge, are guarded by men of Gilead, each company demanding a peculiar "shibboleth," so that the most valiant defender may cross the stream and enter the city at none other passage than that which he guards; and the wayfarer, confused by the multiform demand, will contentedly dwell without. And yet, men and brethren, is it not true, absolutely, incontrovertibly true, that the ground of hope is with each and all the same? Is it not true that, from the self-styled infallible vicar of God upon earth to the most illiterate and most bigoted partisan of ultra Protestantism, each and all believe "that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved?"

We Christians are separated into almost hostile bands; and those without, who believe as we believe, and are being saved from sin as we are, by the might of the Spirit of Jesus, yet

have not put on the badge—why? Because the leaders, in their very eagerness to make it more plainly visible, in their honest desire to protect it from disgrace, and to make it more efficient protection to him who shall wear it, have added new features which the recruit cannot find in "the pattern shown in the mount." Yes, my brethren, I believe that the evil of our Christian age, the burden under which the religion of Jesus Christ is being wearied that its mighty strength cannot be displayed, is the erecting of mere theological opinions and theories into articles of the faith; the making tests of communion with the Church on earth other than the one simple, all-embracing test of the Apostle, the loyal acceptance of Jesus Christ, the risen Saviour, as the very hidden man of the heart, that animated, enabled, restrained, directed, controlled by His Spirit, the life we live therefore may be His life; and the honest confession of this acceptance publicly as He appointed.

Therefore I am come to speak to you of Discrimination as the crying need of the

Church to-day ; Discrimination as to Dogma, that we preach according to the analogy of the faith ; that we preach only Jesus and the resurrection as the essential revelation, the Gospel of good tidings ; that we preach plainly the Apostles' Creed as the statement of facts to be received (for I thank God from my heart that only this is demanded by the venerable Church whose commission we bear) ; that we preach Him, and not any theories *about* Him ; Him the only begotten Son of the Father ; Him the Revealer of that Father as the Father of all men ; Him the Mediator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, Whose Spirit shall be ours if we believe in our heart and confess with our mouth, shall be ours to teach us what we ought to do, and to enable the performance.

But I would not be misunderstood to speak disrespectfully or slightingly of the great body of other doctrines, important, interesting, helpful to many, which are connected in one way or another with the religion of Jesus. Surely there are heights of holy knowledge to be

scaled, there are depths of revealed truth to be fathomed. Light is thrown back upon the eternal past, and we may please ourselves with guesses about the Divine working ; light is cast forward upon the uncertain future, and we may speculate on our knees what the end shall be. Yes, the disciple of this risen Master will be ever learning, that he may come to the full knowledge of the truth at last. The words of the Christ Himself, the words of His Apostles who spake in His Name and by His Spirit, afford material for thoughtful, prayerful study, are the wells of salvation from which we must draw the living water to refresh our thirsty spirits ; but to the man who asks now as aforetime, What must I do that I may be saved?—saved here if there be no heaven nor hell beyond—the answer is to be now as then : not any inquisitorial search to find out what have been the dealings of the Spirit with his spirit, not any setting forth of theory as to the nature of atonement, not any forensic metaphors of imputation of guilt and of righteousness, nor mercantile simile of bargain and payment ; nay,

these are but theories, efforts to explain the inexplicable ; but I will tell him who Jesus was, and what He was : His life, His death, His resurrection ; and then; " If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Secondly, I wish to speak of the need for discrimination in the method we shall adopt in presenting the evidences of Christianity to unbelief.

Thirdly, I would make application of this same principle to our differences of opinion touching ritual or worship—the mode of expressing our devotion to Him in Whom we have believed, and Whom we have confessed.

And fourthly, I would ask for discrimination in the judgment of Christian people concerning questions relating to recreation and amusement ; questions as to whose decision I believe that we are now standing on ground that is wholly untenable.

And in beginning to speak in this first Lecture of the necessity for discrimination in the

presentation of dogmatic truth, I would make plain, if possible, that I am not quarrelling with Creeds and Confessions of faith, nor yet with Catechisms and Articles of Religion. I recognize fully the authority of the Church to fashion such caskets to enshrine the precious deposit ; I recognize not only the right to form, but also the necessity for, such tests of even the religious opinions of those whom she will send forth to teach and to premonish her children, to warn and persuade men that they neglect not the great salvation. I further recognize their value as lights shining in a dark place, and so helping the unlearned to understand the meaning of those Scriptures by which they may be "most surely proven." But if the casket shall be offered as the jewel itself ; or if some earnest, honest inquirer cannot find his way to its opening ; if to some mind the interpretation of Catechism or Article be a darkening of the truth as he has learned it, shall he be denied the privilege of the baptismal sign or of the Master's feast ?

As I said a little while ago, my brethren, I

thank God that we have inherited, as part of the wisdom of the ages, our Office for the Administration of Baptism, which demands as prerequisite only the acceptance of the Apostles' Creed, with renunciation of Christ's enemies, and the promise of obedience to His will. And these last are but the essential manifestation of the welcome of Him to the heart, as the supreme authority of the life. This is the wisdom of the ancient historic Church; but is her wise moderation in all cases suffered to be sufficient by those who minister in her name? The inquiry cannot be profitless, and as profitable it may be to consider the wider departure from this Apostolic and Scriptural standard of required belief, on the part of those who have left the old paths to follow some deviser of new speculative system, the propounder of new theory, who must in the very nature of the case demand acceptance of the system or the theory as condition for enrollment in the new Communion.

The Apostle, as it seems to me, proclaims concisely and yet clearly, in this motto-text I

have read, the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, any one of which being taken away the religion could have no reality. And these are—first, that there is a something from which mankind, *all* mankind, needs to be saved ;

Secondly, that a Saviour, the Lord Jesus, has come, and has accomplished that deliverance ; and,

Thirdly, that there is a means, even the faith of the heart and the confession of the mouth, by which each and every man born of a woman may secure for himself the help of that Saviour, and the consequent salvation from that which oppresses and makes afraid.

Now let us inquire briefly what has been the treatment of these three fundamental doctrines in their presentation by Christian teachers to the children of men. I answer, first of all, that with reference to each of the three there has been analysis, exposition, explanation, in the shape of pulpit exhortation, of ecclesiastical practice, and, alas ! of dogmatic denunciation, all alike unwarranted by the Holy Scripture.

Do not misunderstand me, again I must ask, that I am in any sense an opponent of theological science and study. The formulation of a systematic science of Christian theology is a duty, even a necessity of the Christian Church and of Christian scholarship. Its inductions from the phenomena of Revelation, its deductions from premises thus found, are alike interesting and profitable; but I do plead that theological conclusions may, nay, *must* be, kept separate and distinct from the essential facts of Christianity, about which they are formed, lest they prove in the time to come, as they have proved in the time past, and are now, hindrances rather than helps to the advancement of the kingdom of Christ among men.

Sin is a fact—hard, stubborn, positive fact—clearly visible to every rational beholder within and without himself. Here, there is no possible conflict between Reason and Revelation. The long watches by day and by night of the scientist, who calls himself nature's servant, do but teach him that which the Holy Spirit revealed

to the mind of the Apostle, that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."* Tares are ever found among the wheat, and the good seed springing up is choked by the thorns. On earth, in air, and sea, the weaker is the prey of the stronger, and the fittest which survives is only the fittest to destroy. The lion *will* tear the lamb who would lie down by his side, and the little child who should lead them. More than this: even in a world grown old under the constant teaching of the Christian Church, the works of the flesh, those shameless enormities we may not name, which the Apostle catalogues for the Galatians, are still manifest; and if so be that through the influence of Christian civilization, which is, you know, a direct product of the religion of Jesus, we have escaped these open violations of the laws of common decency, yet in ourselves we behold an ever-active principle developing itself into wrath, malice, and falsehood, if so be that we have learned to prevent its utterance of blasphemy and foulness. Yes,

* Romans 8 : 22.

there can be no controversy here—sin is a fact. More than this: the universal consciousness of mankind bears witness to man's inability to master this enemy who has gained, how we know not, possession of the very citadel of his life. Pagan poet and Christian philosopher alike is spokesman of the race when each declares, "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do";* and it is the voice of nature, human nature, aroused by the Holy Spirit from its sleep, to the recognition that this body to which it is chained is dead, which cries out in St. Paul: "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"† because the spirit's inherent powers are seen to be insufficient for the task. Therefore clearly we may hold and must teach that a belief in the reality of sin is a necessary element of the belief in Jesus Christ as the Deliverer from sin; that conviction of sin must precede and be a reason for the conviction of righteousness, of that justification of the sinner which the Father hath pro-

* Romans 7 : 19. † Romans 7 : 22.

vided, and of that judgment by which the Prince of this world shall be condemned.

It will follow, too, doubtless, that in proportion to the intensity of the consciousness of our guilt will be the eagerness of our joy when we have learned that God has put away our sin, and the capacity of our love for Him who has so loved us. But what may I demand on this point, of those who come saying with the Greeks in the old time, "Sir, we would see Jesus, we have heard of the marvellous beauty of His Being, we have seen the renewing, regenerating work of His grace; we would join ourselves to His company and be called by His name"? May I demand that these shall accept my theory of the necessary character and exhibition of what I call conviction of sin? Shall I hold up before them the picture of the blinded persecutor on the Damascus road, fallen prostrate to the earth, overwhelmed by the vision of the light of God's holiness, hearing no sound save the dreadful voice of demand, personal and direct, "Why persecutest thou Me?" and insist that this is

the normal expression of the dealing of God with man, in the day when He looks upon him to take away his reproach and his despair; whereas the same Scripture record tells of other men, Apostles and Martyrs as well, who followed the Christ under the compulsion of the beauty and glory which were manifested in Him, and only after long years of companionship came to know what great things must be done, and what great things He had done, for their souls?

"Repentance," the Church teaches her children required of persons to be baptized, is that "whereby they forsake sin." Ah! yes, *forsake sin*, renounce it in its every recognized form, and all the agents inciting to its performance, and all the means by which they secure our compliance: this the necessary result of the belief with the heart in this risen Christ. 'Tis the very first outgoing of the newly-planted life; but this one test complied with, who shall dare demand that other be offered? And yet is it not lamentably true that false theory on this point set forth as scriptural truth has been

a fruitful source of evil, that a multitude of men honest and true have been kept away from the confession of the Master because they could not proclaim as theirs this experience, it may be real, to their teachers? They might not enter the city, because their approach had not been along that road which the watchman and guide declares to be the only way of access.

Straightway when we speak of this particular departure from the catholic freedom of the religion of Jesus, we think of its furthest development in the mad doings of the followers of a good and great man: the anxious-bench; the multitude stirred into frenzy by the clamorous appeals of the preacher, which he makes to men and to God with equal fervency and equal familiarity; the singing by a great congregation of simple melodies with words of sweetest simplicity and tenderness; and as natural consequence the physical excitement bred as by contagion. These things we have seen, and, alas! have seen the professed convert wake up the next day to consciousness of the unreality of the whole transaction, to recogni-

tion of the fact that in purpose he had not forsaken sin and turned to God, and to an after lifetime of unbelief in the divine origin of the Christian religion. I believe these ranting follies in the name of Jesus have done more to damage His cause than all the utterances of that scientific scepticism whose attacks seem to be the only danger that our champions now dread.

But are we, the inheritors of that "form of sound words" which protests by its prescribed requirements against such disordered excess being the regular and proper result of the working of that Spirit, who "is not the author of confusion but of peace"—are we without blame in this matter? Do not individual ministers of this Church unwarrantably set up a standard of requirement on this subject which the Church has not erected? "Repentance," remember, is that "whereby we forsake sin"; that only this Church declares. Remember, further, the instances of repentance recorded for our learning in Holy Scripture are just as varied in their incidental characteristics as are

the temperaments of those in whom this spiritual process goes on. David the royal Psalmist rent his clothes and lay all night upon the earth when convinced of his sin by the mouth of the Prophet ; Simon Peter went out from the presence of the Master Whom he had denied, and wept bitterly ; the Publican in our Lord's parable "sighed and smote upon his breast" ; Zaccheus did neither weep nor sigh ; and the penitence of each and all is declared equally acceptable to God. Repentance is that whereby we forsake sin ; yes, *all sin* which the Holy Ghost shall convince us to be sin ; and except it bear this fruit, surely our faith in the Lord Jesus is vain ; but let us take good heed that we who have found peace in believing despise not the experience unlike our own, and so quench the spark of life which may be kindling in the heart.

One word more on this point. May I demand of him who cometh to confess Jesus Christ that he believe in the eternity of sin, and so in the never-ending duration of its punishment ?

It need hardly be said that I am not here to

express my assent to, or my denial of, any one of the theories upon this subject which have made so large a part of theological controversy in our own time. It matters not whether the speaker or whether any other divine agree *in opinion*—mark you, *in opinion*—with the gifted rhetorician of the Abbey who sets forth in such beautiful words an eternal hope for all our race because of a continued probation in the unseen world ; or whether he follow the venerable and learned Oxford Professor, and find equal comfort and hope in the thought that we cannot know what souls do not die in a state of grace, and "that the merits of Jesus reach to every one who wills to be saved, whether in this life they knew Him or knew Him not."*

It matters not whether any individual Churchman may hold the opinion of the elder Calvinists and of their modern interpreters, who even in popular discourse can say, "When the damned jingle the burning irons of their torment they shall say, 'For ever!'

* Pusey's "What is of Faith as to Eternal Punishment?" p. 14.

when they howl, echo cries, 'For ever!' "* or whether he accept the hypothesis of "conditional immortality," as clearly and ably set forth by one of our own most distinguished men, that the "everlasting punishment" of the wicked is the taking away of an endless life. I say it matters not: I mean, of course, that his opinion upon this confessedly mysterious subject can properly make no difference in his proclamation of the Gospel message, and certainly it can make no difference in the password he may require at the door of the kingdom; for it seems to me that perhaps that theory containing most of appeal to the fear of physical suffering offers least deterrent influence against the commission of sin.

No topic of human thought can be fraught with higher interest than this: What shall be the condition of men in that world to which we depart through "the grave and gate of death"? Men will think about it, and must speak about it to those whom they are sent to teach; but let us remember ever to speak our

* Spurgeon, quoted by Farrar, "Eternal Hope," p. 1.

opinions as *opinions*, and not as dogma resting upon Church authority or *plain* scriptural declaration.

"The Church," it has been beautifully said, "has its long list of saints; it has not inserted *one* name in any catalogue of the damned."* As truly it may be said, the Church requires of all who would enter its communion, the confession of belief in the life everlasting but nowhere has it asked for like belief in the never-ending death.

Sin is a fact; the punishment of sin is a certainty now and here, and must be there if unforgiven and unremoved; but what emotional evidence shall alone attest our conviction of sin, what details of renunciation other than those plainly set down in Scripture shall alone declare our forsaking of sin, what shall be its punishment in character and duration—these are theories, opinions, important it may be, and interesting, but they are not essential part of Christianity, and cannot "be required of any

* Quoted by Pusey, "What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?" p. 14.

man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Secondly, the Apostle declares that this deliverance is to be effected by belief, but a belief of the heart as well as of the head, and by the confessed acceptance of a Person and not of a doctrine. This crucified Jesus Whom he preached everywhere, as declared to be God's Son with power by the resurrection from the dead; Whom his colleague Simon Peter proclaimed unto the house of Israel as made by Jehovah both Lord and Christ; Who in the presence of chosen witnesses had ascended into heaven; He it is, the Apostle writes, Who saves; and he adds that this work is accomplished by the making His life which He brought back from the grave to become our life by believing in the heart in the reality of this risen life.

So far, as it seems to me, all is simple and easy of comprehension, however it may be difficult to receive upon any evidence the fact that He rose from the dead. But we would know,

naturally we would know *all* the history of that wondrous Life, and we eagerly seek the companionship of the men who did hear His words and see His works, who did eat and drink with Him after His earthly life was ended. They tell us that He was born by miracle, without the taint of our nature's curse. They tell us, nay, He tells us, in words which are their own authentication, because no human imagination could have conceived them, that God is His own Father, in other and closer relation than that He bears to His sons by creation ; that He lived by essential existence before that Abraham began to be ; that His works are the works of His Father, and as little subject to the limitations of Moses' law ; that He Himself gives eternal life to them that hear His voice and follow Him ; that He Himself will send the Comforter from the Father ; nay, finally, that He and His Father, that Eternal God, are *One ;* and the response in some cases comes back from the angry auditors in the stones wherewith they would kill Him, "because," as they said, "that Thou being a man makest Thyself God."

More than this : because He ever speaketh of the Comforter Whom He will send as a Person, and because to Him are ascribed attributes of Deity ; and because, finally, when the hour of His departure is at hand, we hear Him speak the parting charge to the Apostles whom He had chosen, that they go and preach His Gospel to all the nations, and that they baptize men into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; therefore of necessity we believe what He hath plainly spoken, that Jesus is God, and that there are three Persons in one God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Yes, we believe it, this whereof we can form no conception, the nature of God, because He Whom we have welcomed to our heart reveals it.

Whatsoever He hath revealed, plainly revealed, either by His words or His life, or by His Spirit to be spoken by the witnesses whom He sent to found and to govern His Church, that we will receive without question, that we must demand that all receive ; for otherwise vain is the claim to believe in the heart that God hath raised Him from the dead. But we

are not bound to believe any theories to explain His redemption, fashioned by ingenious inferences from the sacred record; for with reference to almost its every detail varying hypotheses have been suggested, equally including the observed phenomena.

To take but one example, and that the chiefest: Again and again while He taught in Jerusalem and in Galilee He foretold to the little company of His immediate followers the impending death that He must die. With ever-increasing clearness, as the time draweth nigh, He makes them understand that He will be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, and that they will crucify Him, and that on the third day He will rise again. More than this, Himself did teach that He would draw all men unto Himself by being lifted up, and in yet plainer words that the Son of Man came to "give His life a ransom for many." The Prophet of the Wilderness, His forerunner and herald, had pointed Him out in the very beginning of his public ministry as "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world";

and His apostles to whom is left the witnessing to the resurrection, the preaching of the deliverance He had accomplished, they ever emphasize this death as the procuring cause of salvation. "God commendeth His love toward us," says St. Paul, "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."* St. John says: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."† St. Peter says: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."‡ Let these passages suffice to represent the apostolic teaching, teaching which the Church has

* Romans 5 : 8–11. † 1 John 4 : 10.
‡ 1 Peter 3 : 18.

echoed in the words which she bids the Priest to speak in the holiest and highest act of her worship, when she gives all glory to the Almighty Father, for that of His tender mercy He did give His only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption: "Who made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

But has the Church, then, set her seal to any theory of the atonement, which you and I and all her children must receive as part of the precious deposit? Must I believe a mode in which Christ hath brought me to God, in order to the assurance of the adoption, the sonship He offers me? Am I shut up, by explicit scriptural statement, or by ecclesiastical dogma resting thereon, to any defined metaphysical conception as to how Christ made His soul an offering for sin; as to why it was necessary that He be "crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt,

but also for actual sins of men"?* I thank God that the utterances of holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and that the formulas of the ancient historic Church, both doctrinal and devotional, are all of such character that, as it seems to me, men holding very differing opinions upon these points, and men holding consciously and definitely no theory at all, may read, mark, and inwardly digest them with equal joy and equal profit.

I take my place in reverent, sorrowing memory at the foot of that cross on Calvary's hillside; I stand in fancy among those despairing men who are looking upon the death-agony of their dearest Friend; I am close to the weeping mother, whose heart the prophetic sword is piercing. I hear the mysterious words of the sufferer, His tender human commending of His mother to His friend, His divine prayer for those who wounded Him, His God-like assurance of blessedness to the penitent transgressor by His side. At last there comes

* "Articles of Religion," Art. 2.

the light at eventide, the resigning His spirit into His Father's hands, and then the expiring mighty shout of the Victor, "It is finished!" —and He is dead. Just when He willed, with perfect control of the event, He is dead. What does it mean? The sun has hidden his face that he may not behold the dreadful sight; nature is shuddering, and the rocks are rent, and the graves are opened. Is it the wings of the crowding angels who are hovering about the scene which shut out the sunlight? Is it the mad rage of the Prince of this world who beholds his own defeat, that causeth the earth his kingdom to tremble and be broken? I turn away with the wondering, fearing multitude, and muse in my heart of that thing which is done, and the question keeps repeating itself, Ah! why hath it pleased the Lord to bruise Him?

One man whom I meet tells me that only therefore was He born; that the incarnation was necessary only to make possible the sacrifice of the body's blood; and another that this cruel, bloody death is only necessary develop-

ment, a natural result of the indwelling of God in humanity, that thereby may be made to the Father the sacrifice of perfect repentance and confession. I am told that in a fiction God hath imputed to Jesus the guilt of the race, and in corresponding fiction will now impute His righteousness to His brethren. I am told by some that God the Father was angry with His children, and that the agony and death of His own Son were alone sufficient to appease His wrath ; and yet another bids me remember how the Son Himself declared that the Father is real Father to all, and because He loved them sent His Son to redeem them. My very soul is weary of their theories. I can find difficulties, yes, difficulties scriptural and natural, in all these theories, and none of them is in any sense adequate interpretation of what is done, and so I turn away to my solitude, believing that God hath raised Him from the dead, believing that His death was surely necessary else had it not been suffered ; believing that because of His life and death He has gained power to give me eternal life ; believing that God is my

Father because He is His Father, as He declared : yes, that though I cannot understand the necessity, or the manner of meeting that necessity, yet that all is done that a Father's love, a Brother's suffering, a Spirit's influence can do, that all men everywhere may be saved from sin and death unto holiness and life. I will believe and I will pray, and I will strive to love Him who has so loved me, and to confess Him with my mouth and in my life, that so I may come at last to see Him, and then shall I know all this whereof now men take so much counsel which is yet dark, and darkened, by words without knowledge.

And now, to speak briefly of the third essential element in the salvation by Christ, enunciated by the Apostle in our text—namely, the belief of the heart and the confession of the mouth as the means of its attainment. I beg you to note his expression, "if thou shalt believe in thine heart," which must, as it seems to me, and as I have already more than once suggested, signify the enshrining of the Spirit of Jesus within our spirit, that He may be the

fountain source of our life. May we not say, in words even less susceptible of misunderstanding, that the faith of the heart that God has raised Him from the dead is the surrender of our will, which is ourself, our very personality, and the taking of His will instead, *because* God hath raised Him from the dead? Now remember, the freedom of our will is the very essence of our personality, even as it is the likeness of God wherein we are created; that will surrendered and the will of another placed on the throne of our being, our very personality is merged in the being of that conqueror, and the life we thereafter live is not our own, but is lived by faith in him. True of any human friend or enemy to whom, from love or from fear, we thus may yield, 'tis true of the relation of the saved to the Saviour, and is the very means whereby their salvation is effected. "The life which I now live in the flesh," writes St. Paul to the Galatians, "I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me."* Again and again we read

* Gal. 2 : 20.

how he writes to Christians that they are "*in* Jesus Christ;" and he says,* "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"; and baptism, St. Peter says, is, in its essential nature, and hence in its efficient power to unite with Christ,† "the answer of a good conscience toward God."

But necessarily the faith of the heart must include the faith of the mind, which is its foundation and warrant. Because we believe upon evidence satisfactory to our understanding that God has raised Jesus from the dead, therefore under the guidance and by the enabling grace of God the Holy Ghost we yield to Him our will, and thus joined to Him we are saved by Him. Mark well too that this faith of the heart is the gift of the Holy Ghost; for Jesus Himself declared that "no man can come to Me except the Father, which hath sent Me draw him."‡ But oh, mark as well how quick He was to add, ". . . and they shall be *all* taught of God. Every man, therefore that hath heard, and hath

* Gal. 3 : 27. † 1 Peter 3 : 21.
‡ John 6 : 44, 45

learned of the Father, cometh unto Me." The faith of the heart, the coming unto Him, is the gift of God, but a gift freely offered unto all; this is His declaration, so that all are without excuse.

But the fact of Jesus' resurrection being received by the mind as any other great fact of history upon sufficient proof, what follows as necessary in its progress from the mind to the heart, in its conversion from an intellectual conviction to a spiritual power? The Holy Ghost is to be the Agent to work the wonderful transmutation; therefore let us beware how we limit or prescribe the mode of His operation. As numerous and varied perhaps as were the different methods of our Lord's working in the days of His human life will be those of His Paraclete in effecting the new creation of the human soul by its self-surrender to the risen Christ. To one, the full realization of his sonship, the full purpose of subjection to Christ, shall come as slowly and as gradually as came the light to the eyes of the blind man at Bethsaida, who at the first touch of the Master's

hand saw "men as trees walking," and after its repetition "was restored, and saw every man clearly."* Another, aroused by the Spirit to a sense of his uncleanness, of his impotence, his curse, shall run as the leper did to fall at Jesus' feet, crying out in an agony of despair, "Lord, Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean;"† and now as then the answer shall come back, "I will, be thou clean"; and new hope and purpose and resolve, with strength to resist and to endure, shall *straightway* come again unto him. To one the waters of the covenant ordinance may bring the comforting assurance and be the medium of regenerating grace, even as Siloam's pool was made to be the conduit of blessing to him who, bidden,‡ "went and washed and received sight"; while to another, groping in the darkness of fear and of doubt, convinced of sin but not yet convinced of the righteousness of God in Christ, some faithful Ananias may be sent with message of help, with commission to put his hands upon him that he may receive

* St. Mark 8 : 24, 25. † St. Matt. 8 : 2, 3.
‡ St. John 9 : 11.

sight. For this only I plead, that we lay not as burdens upon the souls of men other than "necessary things"; that we hinder not the confession of the mouth by theories of our own as to what must be the process of formation of the crystal faith. Does the man assert his belief in his heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead, and is he come to renounce His enemies and to swear the sacrament of obedient following for all the years to come? Then I ask not by what path the Holy Ghost has brought him to this state of salvation. I pry with no sharp-pointed question into the past experience, lest I damage and destroy the tender plant whose seed has just sprouted in the darkness and silence of its spirit-home. I ask not for acceptance of any theories of sin or of reconciliation, nor yet for promises of specific renunciation or performance. There is not time or occasion for me to give long instruction as to modes of ordinances or sacramental efficacy. He would confess with his mouth, Him in whom he has learned to believe with his heart, that he may come into the assured

state of salvation, and I dare not demand aught else. By and by he, too, as member of the Christian host may, nay, must be, student of the ancient writing and of the Church's teachings ; but before he puts on the uniform let us beware that we make no unauthorized demand of theological orthodoxy. I will tell him, if he ask of these things, that concerning them there is honest difference of opinion among Christian men ; will tell him that his opinion is as free and unconstrained as theirs ; above all will tell him that to know Jesus and not doctrine about Jesus, that the having Him as tenant of the heart, and not the having orthodox views about Him in the mind, that this is eternal life.

One word more : How may I know the reality of the supposed dealing between Christ and my soul? Surely the religion of Jesus must afford some test whereby its alleged influences may be tried, some seal of authentication of the title to salvation it claims to give. Ah ! what havoc has been made at this point by the contending theories of the Doctors, and what barriers against the entrance of men into the

Church have been builded of the dead bodies of the contestants !

Wouldst thou be assured of thy salvation ?—go fall on thy knees before the infallible teacher, guide, Vicar of Christ. His representative is in every parish, and for all practical purposes each parish Priest is to the penitent infallible. Tell him thy faith and thy sin, the health thou hopest thou hast, the disease thou fearest is lurking in thy soul ; he, the Priest, the physician of the soul, will give thee medicine if needed, or will guarantee the soundness if it be there. Thou shalt depart in peace to thine house ; for do not the Priest's lips keep knowledge ?

At the opposite pole of the ecclesiastical sphere I find other theory, standing sentinel, armed to completeness, and ready for battle ; nor Priest nor word of absolving authority will he admit to be possible or helpful. Wouldst thou be assured of thy salvation ?—look in thy heart and read the writing of the Spirit, whereby He will witness with thy spirit.

I thank God, my brethren, that here as before

the wisdom of the ancient Church is manifested ; and oh ye, her ministering servants, be careful that in eager pursuit of logical, systematic consistency, ye turn not aside to the right hand nor to the left, neither to the bastard Romanism of a mock confessional, nor to the partisan Protestantism of a pretended miraculous experience ! Our Church has no theory. The minister of Jesus Christ declares with authority the covenanted terms of forgiveness, and when the confession of a true faith is made with seeming honesty he declares sin forgiven and new birth accomplished. This is but the inherent necessary function of the official character. But still we are not left in doubt and fear in such vital matters. The gift of Christ is not only salvation from sin, but salvation unto righteousness ; not merely deliverance from penalty, but from power. Thou wouldst know whether in very deed thou hast believed in thine heart and confessed with thy mouth unto eternal life ; then rise up and walk, in the new strength born of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the path that He has ordained. No

theory of absolution is needed ; the fact of deliverance from sin is proven by the fact of new life conferred. Yes, to believe with the heart in the risen Christ ; to confess Him, His indwelling Presence and government with mouth and life, this is salvation, no matter for orthodoxy or heterodoxy of mere religious opinion ; no matter for the rudeness or the perfection of our liturgic forms ; no matter for conformity or disregard of the arbitrary standards of supposed religious conduct. This St. Paul says is eternal life ; this Reason says is salvation, for it is union with Him who is the Life, Him Who hath conquered death and hell, and over Whom death hath no more dominion.

LECTURE II.

Discrimination as to Evidences.

LECTURE II.

DISCRIMINATION AS TO EVIDENCES.

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?"—ROMANS 10 : 14.

WE follow the great reasoner in his argument: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. . . . Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"; but "how," he adds, "then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" That is, for what reason, impelled by what motive, shall they appeal for deliverance and salvation to one of whose power to save they have not been convinced, and to whom, therefore, they are not persuaded to surrender their will? The mind must accept as true warrant of confidence the evidences of His claim to be the Saviour from sin before the heart can believe to the attainment of His

righteousness and the mouth confess "unto salvation." Hence the necessity for evidences of Christianity; and because the doubts as really as the beliefs of an age will take their shape and their expression from the philosophy of that age, hence the necessity that the mode of stating these evidential arguments shall be changed from time to time; and we may not be surprised if the defence sufficient in one generation shall not suffice to protect against the new assault of its successor.

You remember the old story told by Canon Liddon in his Bampton Lectures, of the sceptical prince who asked his Chaplain to give him some clear evidence of the truth of Christianity? The king had not much time to spare for such matters, and would have the reply contain but few words; and the Chaplain tersely answered, "The Jews, your Majesty."

Can we make such response to patronizing inquirer of to-day, with good hope that the witness of the long history of national expectation, and of the still continued condition of national isolation and yet of thorough dispersion,

shall have weight to convince of the claims of the Christ? True, there is record of the existence of Messianic hope for thousands of years, and of this hope symbolized and reinforced by prophetic declaration and by ritual observance; but our inquirer will object that our predictions were spoken after the events, or, like the acts of this people's worship, have been tortured into reference to the Christ who should come. Point him to the present condition of the "chosen people," and bid him see how it is as entirely separated from the peoples among whom it dwells, as when in the day of its glory it dwelt in that little narrow tract of country, hedged in by mountains and the sea; bid him note the unmistakable, the ineffaceable characteristics of countenance, the stain that will not disappear, the indelible brand of an "unexpiated self-imprecated guilt;" * he will tell you that it is but a notable instance of the "persistency of type"; and, more than this, that the nation is itself beginning to dig down the walls which have separated it from those among whom it

* Liddon's Bampton Lectures, p. 97.

sojourns, because no longer "its heart, its home, its future are elsewhere"; * because it no longer hopes for Him whom we Christians have found, and no longer "witnesses by its accumulating despair to the truth of the creed which it so doggedly rejects." † Prophecy, whether of Hebrew seer or of Hebrew national life, will not bear the whole burden.

Shall we then call our inquirer to come see a man who must be the Christ, because, as the Pharisee confesses, "no man can do these miracles" which He has done "except God be with Him"? Shall I bid him come taste the new-made wine at the wedding feast at Cana, or summon him to help the fishermen drag to shore the breaking net into which Divine Power has compelled the crowding multitude of fishes? Shall I give him place in the fast-filling ship, that he may hear the words of the just-awakened Jesus rebuking the winds and the sea into calm? Or shall he be called to shudder at the sight of the demoniacs "coming out of the tombs exceeding fierce," that he may hear their

* Liddon's Bampton Lectures, p. 97. † Ibid.

words of despair, and then behold them "clothed, and in their right mind," by the mighty word of the Deliverer? Shall I command that he make one of the little company who stand wondering about the bed where lies the dead maiden, and see how her spirit comes again at the summons of the Nazarene; or that he tarry with the multitude at the gate of the "city called Nain," when the prophet stops the bier, and gives the dead boy back again, alive, to the arms of the widowed mother?

Our inquirer will answer, it may be, that he cannot receive as genuine and authentic record of real events these stories of wonders wrought by the hands of Him we worship; or admitting most probably, that the record is true in the general, he may deny the possibility of such reported occurrences, and explain their finding place in the story of a good man's life by the natural tendency and desire to paint such halo of glory about the head of a beloved teacher: the inevitable confounding of the false with the true, the legendary with the historical, in the earliest records of a people's history.

Let us assume that he is an honest sceptic, who believes in God, and who, like Dr. Carpenter, the Coryphæus of modern theistic scepticism, is "not conscious of any such scientific 'prepossession' against miracles as would prevent me [him] from accepting them as facts if trustworthy evidence of their reality could be adduced." Let us assume that for him, as for this scientist, the "question is simply, 'Have we any adequate historical ground for the belief that such departure [from the laws of nature] has ever taken place'"?* Then see what difficulties present themselves in the way of his thus being convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, as the very initial step in the ascent to his belief of the heart unto righteousness, and confession with the mouth unto salvation.

The tendency of modern philosophic thought is to demand verification as the great test of truth, because the whole progress of human discovery goes to show that only verified facts have ever conducted to valuable knowledge.

* Row's Bampton Lectures, p. 29.

And this tendency, mark you, will show itself in the habits of mind, not alone of the student and the scientist, but just as plainly in those of the artisan and the laborer, because they breathe the air of their age, and are necessarily affected by the temper and tone of its philosophy. *A priori* considerations have well nigh ceased to have any value in the determination of what is truth, and the opinion is everywhere, that "facts which can receive no kind of verification, either in the realities of the present or in the palpable historical events of the past, can only be accepted as true on an amount of evidence which is practically demonstrative." *

* "Looking at it not only as our right, but as our duty, to bring the higher critical enlightenment of the present day to bear upon the study of the Gospel records, I ask whether both past and contemporary history do not afford such a body of evidence of a prevalent tendency to exaggeration and distortion, in the representation of actual occurrences in which 'supernatural' agencies are supposed to have been concerned, as entitles us, without attempting any detailed analysis, to believe that if we could know *what really did happen*, it would often prove to be something very different from what is narrated."

"The scientific theist," the same writer says, "who re-

How, then, shall we justify to our inquirer the claims of our Master to his homage, if those claims be made to rest exclusively, or even primarily, upon the basis of the physical miracles recorded in the New Testament?

It has been well pointed out by Canon Row, in his Lectures upon "Christian Evidences viewed in Relation to Modern Thought" (to which work I would confess myself most largely

gards the so-called 'laws of nature' as nothing else than man's expression of so much of the divine order as lies within his power to discern, and who looks at the uninterruptedness of this order as the highest evidence of its original perfection, need find (as it seems to me) no abstract difficulty in the conception that the Author of nature can, if He will, occasionally depart from it. And hence as I deem it presumptuous to deny that there might be occasions which in His wisdom may require such departure, I am not conscious of any such scientific 'prepossession' against miracles as would prevent me from accepting them as facts, if trustworthy evidence of their reality could be adduced. The question with me, therefore, is simply, 'Have we any adequate historical ground for the belief that such departure has ever taken place."—*Dr. Carpenter, Contemporary Review, January*, 1876, *quoted by Canon Row, Bampton Lectures for* 1877, *p.* 412.

indebted for the thoughts I am to present in this Lecture), that our modern belief in the invariability of the forces of the material universe and in the continuity of nature has increased the evidential value of miracles, "if we could witness them ourselves, or their occurrence could be proved by demonstrative evidence." For we believe that only the power of the Creator Himself could interrupt this established order, whereas in the early ages the belief was prevalent that other beings could interfere with and modify it. But, on the other hand, the difficulty of giving the satisfying proof to this modern demand for verification is immeasurably increased.

The men of to-day will not accept a reported miracle—nay, will not condescend to examine the evidence of the alleged occurrence. True that a gulf divides the pretended miraculous workings of Roman Catholic images and of spiritualistic media, from those ascribed to Jesus Christ; and yet as to the evidence by which their reality is maintained, that attesting the last-named class of phenomena is unusually

strong ; and, according to highest scientific authority, explanation of some of them is impossible by the hypothesis either of fraud or of mesmeric influence.

Let us, then, recognize with all frankness the difficulty of an honest seeker for truth in our day, in receiving the Gospel story of the miracles of Christ. First, he must have a special historical training to fit him to appreciate the mass of historic testimony, complicated and tedious, by which the truth is sustained ; or else must take his belief at second hand, against which the very spirit gotten from his age revolts. He is met by advocates of the new learning, who tell him that, granting the record to be genuine, and the witnesses, whose testimony is there written, to have been honest, yet were they deluded, laboring under mental hallucination which mistakes subjective impressions for objective reality, a phenomenon which has been frequent in all ages of the world ; and bids him remember that even good Sir Matthew Hale could condemn a woman to death for witchcraft. He will ask him how he can dis-

tinguish clearly and unmistakably, with such absolute certainty as to justify decision of the question as to ascribing divine honors to a man, between the alleged marvels of the New Testament and those which, resting on attestation almost as incontrovertible, are yet rejected as unrealities. And, Christian men and women, Clergy and Laymen, ye who teach and ye who learn, let us honestly recognize the embarrassment of the honest mind ; let us not denounce him for his refusal to accept the story of this natural and glorious manifestation of the Godhead which was in our Lord Jesus Christ ; rather let us seek to find other pathway by which he may be introduced to the All-glorious Presence, that seeing Him he may recognize the lineaments of Deity, and know with us that it is but *natural* " that mighty works do show forth themselves in Him." Yes, let us learn the wisdom shown by the man who had followed Jesus from the place where John baptized, to Cana of Galilee, and who would bring his friend to the blessed knowledge which he himself had gained. " Philip findeth Nathanael,

and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." How natural the reply we hear, what perfect type and prophecy of the answer of scepticism in all time: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Shall the order of nature be violated, and its continuity broken? Shall new species be evolved from antecedents offering no such prospect? What evidence can suffice to convince of such monstrous development? And the answer is so simple, so plain: there is nor argument from prophecy accomplished, nor from miracle wrought; there is no adducing of the authority of person; the words of witness which John Baptist spake are not rehearsed; no, "Come and see"; come see Him for yourself that He is His own witness; that His words, His deeds, *Himself* declare that He is the Christ whom Jehovah did promise. Yes, my friends, here in the very beginning of the history of the kingdom of God upon earth is set forth the divine model of the Christian evidences, even that Jesus is Himself the

evidence of His divine origin and mission, and that the showing Him, who and what He is, is the first, the chief thing to do, that men may believe in Him.

In the early days of the Christian Church, when Christian apologists were contending against Pagan misbelief and superstitious idolatry, and seeking to supplant them with Christian truth, "with them the moral aspects of Christianity preponderate over the miraculous, as the chief means of winning the assent of the heathen to the Gospel." * And surely to-day the demand for verification, the latest offspring of modern thought, leads us to the necessary return to this oldest method of defending and advocating our religion. What can we show to men as capable of this universal test, that seeing they may believe? I answer: we can show them Jesus Christ as the miracle of miracles, for Whose being and actions the known forces of the universe are inadequate to account, and that His Presence and action are capable

* Row's Bampton Lectures, p. 32.

of verification in the history of the past and the facts of the present.

I. The influence of Jesus Christ is the most palpable fact in the history of mankind. It may, I think, be said, without fear of contradiction, that even as the chronology of our age takes as its starting point the supposed year of His birth, that so the course of events in the development of mankind morally, and indirectly politically, has received more modification from this cause than from all others combined. Says Mr. Lecky, the infidel historian of morality: "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character, which through all the changes of eighteen centuries has filled the hearts of men with an impassioned love, and has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments, and conditions; has not only been the highest pattern of virtue, but the highest incentive to its practice, and has exerted so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than

all the disquisitions of philosophers, and than all the exhortations of moralists.''* Here is a fact, capable of verification, and verified under the inspection of one unwilling to admit the further fact claimed to be its only adequate explanation.

II. Again, the Christian Church is a fact. Its presence in the world can be traced without effort for nearly nineteen hundred years, as the home of that spiritual influence whose effect in the softening and regenerating of mankind the historian finds so marvellous, and as the appointed agent for its diffusion. By undisputed evidence we can verify its humble beginnings in Jerusalem, its gradual establishment in every portion of the great empire, until at the end of three hundred years it welcomes the great Emperor within its doors, and the history of Christian civilization begins.

III. But, further, this power which has been so mighty in the past that the infidel must confess "that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and

* Lecky, "History of Morality," vol. ii. p. 8.

to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and than all the exhortations of moralists," is claimed to be as active and efficient now ; and this fact is capable of verification by you and me.

Certainly the kingdom of Christ, the Church of Jesus, is still a present and potential factor of our nineteenth-century civilization ; and though its outward form be different from that which welcomed Constantine, in that the one organization of that day is now divided into many, yet each and every part still claims to be builded on the one foundation, Jesus Christ ; that its cause of being is the worship of Christ ; that its message is to proclaim the redemption He has made ; and that the blessing it has to offer in His name is His regenerating Spirit.

More than this : some of the existing organizations are careful to maintain and assert their organic connection, even in external order, with the historic Church of the earliest day, that by no possibility they may lose the covenanted Presence of the Founder ; while others give as the very warrant and ground of their

separate existence, the fact that by omission or commission of discipline, by slothful neglect or undue performance of ritual, by a veiling of important revelation, or by the assertion of inference as dogma, the manifestation of Christ was hindered in the Church from which they came.

Just as certainly, in all the Churches of today are found men who, quickened by the spirit of Jesus into all-surrendering self-devotion, and burning with a zeal as bright and as fierce as was St. Paul's, have "counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord." You and I can put our hands on men who for the love of Christ have abandoned home and its delights, who have suffered shipwreck and imprisonment, and hunger and cold, and are just as ready as was Paul to brave the mad rage of a populace or the doubtful judgment of ignorant heathen magistrate, that they may publish among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

More than this: now as aforetime there are daily added to the Church men and women who

would be saved by this Jesus, in Whom they have believed with the heart, and through the working of His Spirit there are wrought transformations of character of whose reality you and I can testify.

Moral miracles confront the observer on every hand, from the beginning of our era until now, which must be just as plain violation of the "law of nature" as those of a physical character, if the conclusions of modern philosophy are to be accepted, "that the forces which energize in the moral world act in conformity with moral laws, . . . that each successive stage of the moral world has grown out of that which preceded it, that its changes are not sudden nor violent, but follow a law of gradual evolution." * True of the race, it is true of the individual, that the present is but the fruit of the past, so long as only the inherent forces are in action, and a result manifesting purpose for which these forces are not competent is a "moral miracle."

I believe, as has already been indicated, that

* Row's Bampton Lectures, p. 133.

multitudes of men are restrained from vice and enabled to purity and morality by the influence of the Christian spirit, though they are not conscious of this assistance, and have not confessed the Christ. Certainly this must be true on the principle just stated, that their life is naturally determined by the atmosphere of Christian civilization into which it is born. And yet in what multitude of cases we have seen this life, despite this its surrounding, breaking forth into excess of riot, and at last, regenerated and softened, made anew into the strength of holiness by the conscious acceptance of Jesus Christ, and the gift of His spirit. Miracles! Oh, if man be part of nature, how shall he not be subject to the inevitable law? If in man are energizing moral forces, of which the power of self-determination is one, how shall they not be subject to moral law, which is just as *natural* as physical law! And yet on every hand to-day we can behold in this moral sphere the water of sorrow changed to the wine of joy and gladness, the tempest of injured hate calmed into peace and love, the

legion of evil spirits cast out, the dead soul roused from the bier of despair and given back as a joy to the mother who mourned it, and all accomplished by belief in Jesus Christ!

Now all alike, Christian and Infidel, declare that the life portrayed in the Gospel of the New Testament is the fountain and origin from which has flowed this stream of blessing to mankind. The expounders of the rationalistic philosophy assert that this is but an "airy nothing," a picture of the imagination, a fancied ideal of perfection, on which rests this vast superstructure; or at least that honest adherents of a good man have dreamed dreams of superhuman excellence, and in blind devotion believed them real attributes of the man Jesus; and that the thousand thousands of the best and bravest of the sons of men, under the inspiration of like deluded confidence, have dared all and suffered all in publishing abroad the gospel of this ideal character.

Then the crucial question of Christian evidence is reached at last: Is the character of Jesus Christ, which is confessedly the creator

of all that is best in the civilization of the world, real or imaginary? May we therefore continue to proclaim the message which nineteen centuries have heard in His name, with good hope that we too may find in its belief true ground of hope of pardon for the past and of help for the future; or must we, under the guidance of these new teachers, confess that our fathers made their life journey leaning upon the hand of a phantom, and in a phantom's arms lay down to sleep?

It is "an ideal character," says the historian whose statement of the wondrous effect by it produced we have heard. What follows? First of all, that if the Jesus of the Evangelists be an ideal creation and not an historical reality, then a mere shadow and spectre has been the efficient cause of a wider blessing than all the realities of earth combined. Well says the Canon of St. Paul's, in contemplating this alternative: "If this be so, one thing is true, and one only—that man is walking in a vain shadow, and disquieting himself in vain. Why, then, struggle for truth? for delusions are

mightier than realities. Let us therefore take refuge in delusions, for their influence for good has been greater than the self-sacrifice of the wisest and best of men. This is the alternative which unbelief presents to us ; and I say it is an alternative terrible to contemplate. If so, all is vanity ; the present life is a dream, the life to come a blank ; and man's only hope—shall I not say, his best hope?—to be speedily swallowed up in that eternal silence out of which he has come, to which he is hastening, and from which there will be no awakening." *

But apart from the absolute absurdity of our being asked to believe that a fiction has been the controlling power in the development of modern civilization, and the basis on which rests nearly every institution for good in Europe and in America, what shall we say of the possibility of such conception of ideal manhood being formed and delineated at the period of the world's history, and among the people, when and where it was confessedly put forth?

* Row's Bampton Lectures for 1877, p. 108.

More than this : what shall we say of the possibility of such ideal character being dramatized by such workmen, through three years of activity, with a pervading unity in the portrayal which itself were a miracle of artistic excellence in any age ? Where and how did they learn to mix the colors with which they have painted this image of such wondrous beauty that it has deluded even its own creators into the belief of its life, and has been the very central sun of a new moral universe which its own action has brought into being ?

Is it conceivable that out of the material in their hands any man, or any number of men can have builded up, even upon the foundation of the character of a good and great man, such a conception as that of the suffering Redeemer, arrayed in a morality more sublime than the sages of Greece had dreamed, and teaching a religion worthy of Him whom they would call the Son of God ? Above all, of what existing matter will they fashion the new power which shall kindle anew in the cold ashes of a hopeless humanity the fire which shall cause the

wheels of purpose again to move, and the effort after holiness to be renewed ?

The day is past when any objector to Christianity will hazard the charge of conscious imposture upon the writers of the Gospel story, but the theories now promulgated, because not so plainly clashing with the phenomena the Gospel present, are beset with almost equal difficulties ; and whatever be the modifications of the " mythical " hypothesis, it inevitably breaks down in the effort to give adequate explanation of the portraiture of the Jesus of the Evangelists, that positive fact which has blessed the world for nineteen hundred years.

As it seems to me, this must be the method of our Christian defence : we must show to our countrymen Jesus in His life, His words, His works, His death, His resurrection, even as they are pictured for us in the Gospels, and demand the explanation of the existence of this portraiture on any other supposition than that of His historical reality. The reality of His being is ample and natural explanation of that

we see, of the Christian Church with its manifold activities of blessing, and of the Christian spirit ever working with new creating energy; and while possibly—I say "possibly" in its widest sense—the continuance of delusion may explain these surroundings and events of our daily life, though unlimited credulity must be demanded for the acceptance of such theory, the delusion of the witnesses shall be found utterly unequal to the unravelling of the mystery of the origin of the Gospel they have preached. We must show to men more and more of the superhuman glory plainly visible in the Life, the miracle of miracles, and bid them explain it by the operation of the known forces of humanity working in obedience to the recognized laws of development. Then we will bid them go near and question Him of whose historical reality they are convinced, for whose words and acts and character their speculations are unequal to account, and they shall hear Him claim to be the *own* Son of the Lord God, to possess the attributes and exercise the power of His Father, and like the guileless Israelite

at Cana, they too who have sought in guileless sincerity to know the truth shall be taught of the Holy Ghost to cry unto Him, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel."

Yes, men and brethren, here is the battle-ground of to-day, even close round about the holiest place, wherein the enemy is boasting that he has already set up his standard, the very "abomination of desolation," if indeed he has proven that the Jesus of our Gospel is but the ideal which enthusiasm has sublimated from the material of our common nature. While we have our Christ, living and loving, even Jesus Who did live and labor, and die and rise again, all for the children of men whose nature He had assumed, it matters not that many doubtful questions must remain unsettled, and even that a long line of outworks, builded, it may be, in the arrogance of long undisputed possession, have been of necessity abandoned. Let it be that there are contradictions in details made by the sacred writers; let it be that there are therein problems in metaphysics and in

chronology of which we can give no solution ; we still have a God to worship, manifested unto us, and Who calls us by His Spirit; we are not without hope or without God in the world.

It will not be expected that I shall do more than suggest this necessary change in the formation of our battle array. A volume and not a lecture were necessary for even the outline of this defence ; and the volumes have been written, for "the Church hath her doctors" now as in the old time, who, in the learned leisure of Abbey and Cathedral close, have noted the drift of the shifting stream of assault, and have reconstructed the old barricades to resist it. I may be permitted, however, to illustrate what I have been saying of the difficulties under which any and all the mythic theories labor in their attempted comprehension of the phenomena of the evangelic record.

Manifestly the mythologists, numerous as they are supposed to have been, to whose widely separated and independent yet united efforts our Gospel pictures of the Christ is to be ascribed, must have started from the point

of the ideas and feelings, moral and religious, possessed by the Hebrew people at the time this development of them was effected. Agreeably to the assumption that the character of Jesus is but "a body of idealized conceptions which have been created by the enthusiasm of His followers," * that it is entirely explained by the normal operation of the normal powers of man, there must be germ in the received opinions and feelings of their age which is possible of development into this fairest product of our race.

Now, grant that the men of the first century of our era had learned from the Book of Enoch that the Christ whom Jehovah had promised is to unite in His Person the divine and the human, yet the difficulty remains—difficulty made more insuperable by the very training they have received under the dispensation of Moses and the prophets—how to represent in action this complex Being.

The author of the Book of Enoch gives no hint how to work out in detail the outline

* Row's "Jesus of the Evangelists," p. 6.

which he has suggested, and the Jesus of our Gospels is separated by a great gulf from the Christ of his conception. More than this: as I have said, every indication to be gotten from their Old Testament Scriptures is of the impossibility of such union, for the Spirit of Jehovah dwelling in man is ever represented as totally distinct from him whom He inspires; and yet, marvel of marvels, the "idealized conceptions" of all these enthusiastic followers are formed in one mould, and the God-man of the Gospels is a character pervaded by an absolute *unity*. There is never a clash or an inconsistency. The divine-human consciousness is portrayed "with an absolute uniformity of aspect throughout the whole extent of the Gospels,"* though confessedly the portrayal is by four different hands, and the unbeliever says, by a great number. With one accord they represent Him as communing in perfect repose with the God whom He calls His own Father; as all unconscious of any illumination from without, which was the highest claim of the old-time

* Row's "Jesus of the Evangelists," p. 19.

prophet ; as never once speaking, " Thus saith the Lord," but always, " *I* say unto you" ; and with as perfect accord they ascribe to Him the very perfection of humanity in the methods of His approach to men. " The divine light has been enshrined by the mythologists in a purely human temple."

As in His words, so in His acts, there is this calmest repose of divine majesty environed by the intensest humanity ; in word and act alike there is the union of unlimited self-assertion and self-abnegation as complete : never once appealing for sanction of His word to the authority of God, never once ascribing the miraculous work to the power of His Father ; and yet the asserted authors of these pretty stories to glorify the memory of a good man must have remembered that for just this failure " to give God the praise," Moses their father was excluded from the Land of Promise. Is it conceivable that with no other suggestions than these, any genius, any enthusiasm of one or of many can have fashioned such a character ?

If we look for a moment at the moral teach-

ing they have put in His mouth, the question, where have they learned it, can find no answer. Will the concession to Jesus of the loftiest genius adequately explain its origin? History proves that "no human being, however exalted may have been his genius, has been able wholly to emancipate himself from the conditions imposed on him by his birth, and the moral and spiritual atmosphere in which he was educated." *

What were the conditions and atmosphere in which Jesus of Nazareth and His followers were born? They were the members of an arrogant, exclusive race, which at this particular period was become to the last degree fanatical and superstitious. This is so indisputably true that, in the opinion of Mr. J. Stuart Mill, it is simply incredible that the discourses attributed to Him can have been invented by the Evangelists, or even by the Apostle Paul. Whence, then, this wisdom to the carpenter's son of Nazareth—this wisdom which has remodelled the ethics of the world—nay, has

* Row's Bampton Lectures for 1877, p. 134.

built up new system for which before Him no foundation had been laid? Yes, I say, built up new system, though it be at the same time gratefully confessed that the human reason is equal to the discovery of moral truth; and more than this, that moral precepts of highest elevation *are* to be found in the writings of the ancient heathen authors, albeit Mr. Buckle's sneering assertion that Jesus' system is not original rests upon but three of such quotations, and although historic criticism almost demonstrates the fact that neither Jesus Christ nor any one of the possible mythologists can have had acquaintance with these ancient writings.

What are the characteristics of the moral teaching of Jesus Christ which distinguish it from that of all who have preceded or followed Him? I answer that it is the proclamation of principles to be the foundation of all moral duty, as wide as the world, as universal as humanity; and secondly, that He reveals the power of faith, faith in a Person as the renovator of the moral nature by making obedience to the moral law a possibility. Where did the

carpenter's son, who has sat at the feet of no teacher, who among the teachers of his nation could have heard no idea of duty as wider than from Dan to Beersheba, and could have heard of the power of faith from none that lived on earth, oh, where can he have learned this wisdom which has made the world wise, this strength which has strengthened our race?

We read on in the story of this mysterious Being, of matchless words and miraculous deeds for which some explanation must be given, and we reach at last the catastrophe. The good man, after supping with His friends on the occasion of an ancestral national festival, begins to be exceeding sorrowful, and to speak words which His companions cannot fail to understand as betokening the apprehension of impending disaster. One of the little company has by Him been charged with treachery, and has gone at His bidding to complete the detected betrayal. With a tenderness which is exquisite. Jesus speaks words of comforting promise to these sorrowing ones; talks to them of the glory which shall at last be the victor's reward,

though now He must be wounded and die, and that glory He says His friends shall share. Like a menial servant he washes the feet of these wondesing disciples, to teach them their highest glory in being ministering servants to the universal brotherhood. Then He goes away to the solitude of a garden, and alone wrestles in an agony of prayer, while those whom He has asked to watch with Him are asleep in indifference. Suddenly the silence of the night is startled by the shouts of a multitude, and its darkness illumined by the flaming torches which they bear. The good man advances to meet them, and asks for whom they are thus seeking. They tell Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." "Jesus saith unto them, I am He. . . . As soon then as He had said unto them I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground."

He is quickly seized and bound and led away to the palace of the high priest, where examination is to be held. The night passes away amid the jeers of the brutal soldiery, who beguile the hours with mocking sport of their

prisoner. The morning dawns, and He is led away to Pilate the governor, who alone can give sentence of death. The prisoner stands in dignified silence. He knows that defence is vain. He will answer never a word to the Governor's questions. He is fulfilling, as He said, the decrees of His Father, and in His Providence He will trust. The coward condemnation quickly follows, and the good man toils away to Calvary, staggering under the burden of the cross ; but even in that extremity He can speak words of consolation and of warning to the women of Jerusalem. The nails are fastened through the quivering flesh, and the cross is uplifted. Three awful hours pass by ere the end comes. Again and again the Sufferer speaks : with the calmness of absolute self-confidence He gives assurance of salvation to the robber hanging by His side, and with the thoughtful tenderness of human affection commends His mother to the care of His friend. He remembers to speak sublimest prayer for the pardon of the ignorant perpetrators of the death He is dying, and even to effect fulfilment

of the least predicted detail of the transaction ; and then, with perfect control of the event, having commended His spirit into the hands of His Father, He bowed His head and died.

Men and brethren, there is no dispute as to the reality of the death by crucifixion of one Jesus of Nazareth at Jerusalem under the reign of Pontius Pilate ; but come and see, is not this the description of the death of a superhuman Being ? And yet what difficulties the dreamers of such splendid vision have overcome in its depicting !

Remember, we saw that their effort was to idealize the character of a good and great man into the conception, possibly suggested by the Book of Enoch, of a Christ in Whom the divine and the human shall be united. Their powers shall be put to fullest test, now that they come to portray the death of such a Being, although there is no suggestion of the death of that divine-human Christ in the writing where they learned His nature, and the apocalypse of Esdras, which tells that Messiah was to die, is of questionable antiquity. But

Jesus did die, and having ascribed to Him the attribute of Christhood, they must portray Him in the hour of death. Bold men they must have been, these fishermen, story-tellers of the world's childhood, who set themselves to the performance of this task. Did they know the Greek poet's story of the rock-bound hero, the son of a god, yet of woman born, and from that learn to picture the suffering Christ? Ah, wonderful as is the creation of Æschylus, who would venture to compare it with that of these ignorant legend-mongers who have given us our dying Redeemer? See, my friends, the enthusiasts must all agree in the difficulties to be encountered and in the methods by which they shall be overcome; for they have been overcome, and in the Gospel narrative is exhibited a death in perfect harmony with the life gone before, a unity unbroken in the least particular. The God-man is to die, take care that the divine is not hidden in the sufferings of the human; take equal care that it lend not undue support to the human sufferer. More than this: remember that the life is to be voluntarily

surrendered in self-sacrificing love, and that, fore-determined of God, it must be accomplished by the agency of self-determining man. And yet see how perfectly the work is done! What artist of to-day would dare add a single touch in hope to heighten the effect produced? Here, as in all the life, there is the calmness of conscious divine power united to the tenderness of human affection. Uninterrupted self-consciousness is united with utter forgetfulness of self. The presence of the traitor disturbs him, for He is a man, but it is the voice of a God which commands his departure. In the garden, while the divine will is in perfect accord with the will of His Father, there is the struggle, the wrestling agony, even to the point of bloody sweat, that the shrinking human will may come into like conformity; and through the humble self-surrender of the man shines the majesty of a God, and the soldiers go backward and fall to the ground. The cross' weight cannot crush the love for the race to which He belongs, and is come to redeem; nor the painful crucifixion of the flesh so engross

the mind's thought that he speak not pardon and prayer.

Men and brethren, it is simply inconceivable that this wonderful creation "was effected by spontaneous elaboration of mythic stories in the original Christian society, for the purpose of investing a human Jesus with the attributes of a divine Christ." Nay, reason demands rather that the beholder to-day, as the centurion who stood wondering at the foot of the cross to which he had nailed the condemned criminal, shall cry out, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

But can I believe, and ask others to believe that this crucified Jesus did rise again from the dead? Certainly, if Christ be not risen our preaching and our faith are vain; certainly, the fact of the resurrection of Jesus is the very corner-stone of the edifice of salvation, the crowning proof of His divine mission, and of His power to save. The Apostle, remember, makes demand for this—this chief, I had almost said this only—as article of faith: "If thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised

Him from the dead." Can I so believe? Grant that He was superhuman, that He was morally all that in the Gospel narrative is declared, because to believe a reality as the original of this representation is easiest explanation of the phenomena. Still, can I believe that he did literally come back alive from the grave?

I answer that to my mind it is *natural* that Jesus shall rise from the dead as He foretold He would do, even as it is natural that disease and demon and death shall be subject to His word, because He was what He was. Yet, be it understood that the resurrection of Jesus stands on another plane than that of the other New Testament miracles, as to evidential value, and so also as to the evidence by which it is assured. That one fact made secure, then all the rest are easy of proof—nay, need no proof: they are the natural workings of Him who is "declared to be the Son of God, with power by the resurrection from the dead." And blessed be God that there is, as I believe, more evidence for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ than for any other event in the history

of mankind! I must tarry for a moment to suggest to you, though it must be in baldest outline, the strength of that guarantee as it presents itself to me.

The examination of the Pauline epistles, of which the historical character is undisputed, will give as necessary results—

1. That within a period of thirty years from the date of the crucifixion, the resurrection of Jesus Christ was accepted as a fact by every section of the Christian Church.

2. That the fact was accepted as the only foundation on which the Church was builded, as the very life of this system of religion, the source of its moral and spiritual power, and the pledge of its promised gift of blessedness.

3. That immediately after the crucifixion the Church was reconstituted on the basis of this belief. Mark you, Paul, the man who bears this testimony, was an agent to destroy this "pernicious superstition," and must as such have had every opportunity for investigating its origin. His testimony excludes the interval of

time necessary for this consolidation of an idle story, by distance and time, into an accepted fact.

4. That Jesus Christ was believed by the whole Church to have been seen alive after His death and burial by a great number of people, singly and in companies, last of all by this Apostle-writer himself ; and finally, that this belief was from the very beginning *the* power of spiritual regeneration.

There is but one hypothesis, other than that of the reality of the event, which can afford explanation of this condition of affairs, and that is, that this belief originated in mental delusion, for no theory of mythical or legendary growth, of gradual evolution, will comprehend these admitted phenomena, while the difficulties attending the work of mythological dramatist, great before, here become simply insuperable ; and the burden is on the unbeliever to give adequate account of the cause which has produced and does to-day produce the mighty miracles in the spiritual sphere which we see and hear. Will the supposition above mentioned,

of mental hallucination, give the relief we seek? Let us ask it two or three questions.

1. Were those despairing disciples who went weeping from the grave where they had laid Him, in such condition of mind as to be by a woman's story kindled into such enthusiasm as to see visions of the risen Master, "and on the strength of such a delusion to found an institution which has stood the test of eighteen centuries"?* Was like enthusiastic delirium imparted to a great number of believers, so that they not only saw Him and heard Him speak, but derived from His words specific teaching, which led to remodelling of the Church, already begun in His lifetime?

2. Were the three principles of Prepossession, Fixed Idea, and Expectancy, in such active operation in the minds of the disciples as to have impelled these disappointed, despairing followers to mistake their visions for external realities?

3. A man brought up in all the learning of his nation, "exceeding zealous for the traditions

* Row's Bampton Lectures for 1877, p. 362.

of his fathers," which traditions this reported resurrection utterly destroys ; a trusted agent of the Authority which would prevent the spreading of this delusion, journeys to a strange city, seeking there his recreant countrymen who have accepted the new faith. He says that he met the risen Jesus in the way ; he says that He talked with Him, and as the result of this belief, he abandons his career at Jerusalem, and devotes a long life, despite suffering and persecution of every description, to the proclamation of the abounding blessing for men offered by this ascended Christ. Let philosophy rationally explain these indisputable facts on the ground of mental hallucination.

I said that here must be our battle-ground, for all depends upon its holding. Christianity does, by its own declarations, stand or fall with the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and while we are content to maintain this line our success is guaranteed. Our enemies would gladly divert us to the defence of what are but outposts, if indeed they be in any sense true points of the Christian position ; and in gen-

eral, the forays successful in our time, whose result has been to bring dismay to the fearful believer, have been directed upon some theory or inference a long way distant from this our citadel, but which, alas ! some of us have been taught to believe to be essential to the integrity of the Christian's hope. Nay, here we will stand.

Here, then, is the record of the life of Jesus Christ, whose existence no theory has been equal to explain ; a part of that record, a natural feature of that life, is His resurrection from the dead, which is so guaranteed as to defy the assaults of unbelief ; here is the Christian Church, and its child, Christian civilization ; and here are the marvels of renewal wrought day by day, verifiable and verified, accomplished by the faith of the heart in the resurrection of its Lord. These are the sureties of our hope, and all else we believe, if at all, only because of necessary connection with, and dependence upon, them.

For example, Jesus Christ declares that the Old Testament writings do testify of Him, and His Apostle by His Spirit ascribes the utter-

ances of these "holy men of old" to the moving of the Holy Ghost. Therefore to me these writings are of authority as containing the Father's testimony to the Son who should come, and are a helpful addition to the evidences of the Christ because they are the account of a natural preparation of that which should be done.

The other miraculous stories of the New Testament, which confessedly stand on different ground from that of the resurrection, we believe because they are reported of Him of Whom they are the natural outgoing ; nay, the record itself which contains them we believe, because it enfolds Him who must be true. I go near and ask Him who He is, and I hear Him say so plainly that He and His Father are One, that He is from eternity, that His are the attributes of God. I see that this is the understanding of His words by those to whom He speaks, and that their threatening words and stones can evoke no syllable of denial or of concession, and therefore, with the Apostle, I bow my head and worship Him, rejoicing that

through Him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father. But theories of incarnation, of atonement, of inspiration—these are but the works, the necessarily imperfect works, of human hands. Christianity does not stand or fall with any one of them, and I will offer to my countrymen facts and not theories. I will even take away from their consideration these things which are shaken, that the "things which cannot be shaken may remain."

This leads me to remark, in conclusion, that perhaps the larger part of the harassing doubts by which believers are distressed, and of the obstacles by which honest inquirers are kept away from confession and assured hope, are due to their entanglement in the meshes of some theory of inspiration. And here I must again express my joyful thanksgiving that we at least, the children of this ancient historic Church, are not burdened in mind or conscience by the necessary acceptance of any theory. Whereas the candidate for ordination is required to subscribe a formula in the words, "I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old

and New Testaments *to be* the word of God," yet the interpretation of the object of that formula in the fuller statement of the Article is, that "Holy Scripture *containeth* all things necessary to salvation." And therefore the man who prefers to express his conviction as to the Revelation in the words that "the Bible *contains* the word of God," rather than "*is*" the word of God, is not hindered, as it seems to me, from so doing, by the Standards of this Church.

And yet, alas! how has our ecclesiastical atmosphere in years past been stirred into tempest by the blasts of controversy upon this point, and our ears been weary with the denunciations of "unsoundness" against those who in this particular seemed to dissent from the theory of the self-styled orthodox, who on *à priori* grounds demand the belief that "every word, thought, conception, and expression in the Scriptures is the absolute dictation of the Spirit of God, and that the writers of the different books in the Bible have merely copied down what the Divine Spirit dictated to them"!*

* Row's "Inspiration, its Nature and Extent," p. 15.

Their opponents, glorying as proudly in their heterodoxy, and publishing from the housetops their belief, just as entirely *à priori*, of the absence of all other than human element in the record, have laughed to scorn the slavish puerility of the Book-worshippers, and made merry over the absurdities resulting from their system. Alas! while the contestants have rejoiced in their struggle, the ignorant and the weak have sorrowed lest their hope was being taken away, and the unbeliever has found new occasion in the doubtful issue, for putting away the consideration of his duty. Oh, let us learn, and let us declare boldly, to the clearing away of many hazy doubts and the strengthening of many trembling souls, that "if the attestation to any revelation that it is of divine origin is sufficient, our belief that it is such a revelation in no way depends on our views as to the nature and extent of the inspiration under the influence of which it has been communicated." * We believe that our Bible is a record of a revelation from our God, because of the suffi-

* Row's "Inspiration, its Nature and Extent," p. 33.

cient evidence accrediting it as such ; but as to the nature of the inspiration vouchsafed to the several writers ; as to the proportion of the elements, human and divine, which go to its making ; as to the manner in which the divine control has been exercised over the human agent, we believe, as of necessity, *nothing*, because no revelation upon that matter has been given. Certainly, the writers of Scripture claim "plenary inspiration"; it follows as of necessity, from the fact that if it is a revelation from God He will give plenary power for the doing of that which He wills to be done. Nothing can be gained by the use of this word, for to determine its value in any case we must first determine the will of the Revealer, which is not possible.

Turn to the New Testament itself, and we read that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son"—nay, rather, *in His Son.* The revelation of God is the Person of Jesus Christ.

We read that Jesus, when He had lived the life of manifestation, departing, said to the Apostles whom He had chosen : "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." But a few days after His ascension we read of the action of the remaining Apostles in filling the vacancy caused by the treachery and death of Judas, and capacity to bear the testimony of an eye-witness is the necessary qualification demanded of the man who shall be numbered with the eleven. These men go forth to bear witness of the Life : on what assistance do they rely ? The Lord has promised the coming of the Holy Ghost, Who shall guide them into all *the* truth, evidently all the truth He willed them to proclaim ; Who shall teach them *all things*, manifestly all *the* things He willed them to teach, for He did not teach them *all things ;* Who shall refresh their memory of the words He had spoken ; Who will enable them to know "things to come" ; and finally, Who will teach them words to answer when they shall stand for His sake before hostile tribunals.

St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, cata-

logues the spiritual gifts which the Church had received in fulfilment of the Lord's promise to confer the energies necessary for the work He had given it to do ; and so far as this description goes it affirms the influence exerted upon the recipient to have been limited. The special enlightenment is said to have been conferred as to a special definite subject-matter only, and the grace given to have operated according to the analogy of the ordinary faculties of the mind ; " the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

What materials are here on which to base a general theory of the nature and extent of divine inspiration ! And yet they are ample to assure me that the witnesses of the resurrection, the publishers of the Word, should be infallibly guided in bearing that witness and in publishing that Word ; should be supernaturally protected from error as to *the* truth, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. May I not rest here and be satisfied ? And resting here, of what concern to me, other than literary or antiquarian, are the petty variations, the minute

discrepancies in the Sacred Records, which the microscopic scrutiny of unbelief has discovered? I am content to wait even till the day of the restitution of all things, that I may know whether Cyrenius was once or twice governor of Syria; and I will not be made unhappy because Strauss boastfully asserts that St. Luke has made an error in describing Lysanias as tetrarch of Abilene in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar.

Having no theory to maintain, I find it but natural that there shall be marks of individuality in the writings of the Evangelists, and an identity of recollection and of description in unessential matters were as strange to me as were an exact similarity of style in writing, while this latter is no less demanded than the former by a verbal, mechanical theory of inspiration.

Were two men or one the fierce occupants of the dwelling among the tombs of Gadara whose demon owned subjection to our Christ? What matters it? He is witnessed unto as mighty to overcome the Evil One who possessed the demoniac.

The ordinary reader finds four different inscriptions recorded in the New Testament as that which was set up over the head of the crucified Jesus, and the ordinary reader finds therein no cause for doubt or alarm, because each proclaims the reality of the death of the King and His claim to be the Christ. But hermeneutic ingenuity has suggested that St. Matthew copied the one in Hebrew, St. Mark that in Latin, and St. John that in Greek, while St. Luke has combined two of the inscriptions into one. Let this example suffice to show us the extremities to which men must have recourse in their effort to make the facts of Scripture harmonize with preconceived theory.

But I may not fail, in conclusion, to call attention to the most serious evil which has arisen from this assertion of extravagant *à priori* theory of inspiration, in the conflict, with which it has had much to do, between the Bible revelation and the discoveries of modern science. I would certainly not be understood as laying the sole responsibility for this evil at the door of the theologian, or as failing to recognize that

the bigotry of physical science has in its Doctors been as violent and as offensive as any that can be ascribed to the Professors of science theological. But the fault with us has been real, and has arisen in largest part, as I have said, from this disposition to theorize, and to the feeling of ignorant fear lest the letting go of the theory should be letting go of the faith. Was it not because of the exigencies of a particular theory of inspiration that for so long a time the battle raged between the testimony of Genesis and the testimony of the rocks, then newly discovered, upon the battle-field of the creation? And constrained by this feeling of loyalty to a theory of inspiration as though it were loyalty to Christ, how hardly and with what unseemly compromises and flank movements did Theology retreat from the ground, forgetting that the rocks are as truly the scrolls of His writing as those Oracles whereof a chosen people was the guardian?

Is it not in obedience to a mechanical theory of inspiration that to-day men are afraid lest the religion of Jesus is going to perish if so be

that the modern scientific hypothesis, as to the development of the universe and of man by process of evolution, shall be proved correct? Shall we strain the language of the writing to make it square with the discoveries of science, or shall we deny the alleged facts? Shall we not rather learn from the great Bishop of Durham, "that the only question concerning the truth of Christianity is whether it is a real revelation, not whether it is attended with every circumstance we should look for. And concerning the authority of Scripture, whether it is what it claims to be, not whether it be a book of such a sort and so promulgated as weak men are apt to fancy a book containing a divine revelation should. And therefore neither obscurity, nor seeming inaccuracy of style, nor various readings, nor early disputes about the authors of particular parts, nor any other things of like kind, though they had been much more considerable in degree than they are, could overthrow the authority of Scripture, unless the Prophets, Apostles, or our Lord had promised that the book containing the Divine Revelation

should be secure from these things." * In other words, that no theory of Divine Inspiration is itself a part of the Divine Revelation, and that we are incapable to determine *à priori* what such revelation must contain. Then because there can be no conflict between the different utterances of the same God, therefore no discovery of science can overthrow our faith ; for there is written no promise that the Spirit would communicate to Prophet or Apostle the truths of science, and no one of them makes claim to such knowledge.

The truth of Christianity then rests upon the reality of the Christ, and the evidence of that truth is the evidence of that reality. This evidence is sufficient and satisfying, for it is Christ Himself, a Being impossible to human imagination to create, and witnessed to by testimony which is inexplicable on the supposition of His unreality. Therefore, I entreat, let us present Christ Himself, living and omnipotent, as in the days of His sojourn here, and not any theories as to the mode of His being or of His re-

* Butler's "Analogy," part ii. ch. 3.

demptive work. So best, I believe, shall men be convinced by His Spirit to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth.

I remember a day when I came, a novice in my Episcopal work, to a little town in my Diocese, where a number of Christian Denominations had each a representative with his shibboleth of doctrine. I was introduced to a leading citizen as to a man much interested in religious matters, who greeted me with the question, "Do you preach final perseverance or falling from grace?" I answered, "I try to preach Jesus Christ, that men may believe in Him and strive to live His life; we shall know all the mysteries when we come where He is." You will pardon the homeliness of the incident, for it illustrates fully all that I have been trying to say, the disposition of the disciples of Christ to be busy with theories of doctrine, whereas the need of men is the revelation of God, which is Jesus Christ Himself, of which revelation He is His own witness.

LECTURE III.

Discrimination as to Ritual.

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DISCRIMINATION AS TO RITUAL.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—ACTS 2 : 42.

I AM to speak this evening of the necessity for discrimination in reference to the subject of worship or ritual; but I am not willing to admit to myself or to another, that in doing so I am putting aside the "weightier matters" of doctrine and evidence for the consideration of the "small dust of the balance," which can be of no value in estimating our condition. To-day our mother Church of England is sorely perplexed by the untoward result of an effort to control, in this respect, the self-will of some of her Ministers, and the persecution alleged to be legalized by the Act of Parliament designed to regulate her public worship, has accomplished more in the direction of her disestablishment

than all the organized combinations of dissent with unbelief. In our own country and Church angry controversy about this matter has disturbed the peace and enfeebled the strength of Dioceses, which has had to the ordinary observer no greater gravamen than the posture of a Minister or the shape of his vestment ; and the world has made itself merry over what it esteems our "much ado about nothing." Let me add that educated and cultivated men and women are being repelled by the worship, bald and unadorned, of our non-liturgical brethren, and that perhaps largest proportion of the proselytes to our communion are attracted by the magnet of our Liturgy.

For many reasons, then, I feel the pressing need of wise discrimination on this subject. Because our often bitter contests are so unseemly, and because they have been of late years the most efficient causes of division in our Christian camp ; because they are an obstacle which they must overcome who would fain worship God in our old-time way, and often they who are just beginning to desire to

worship Him in any way; and, because the Ritual of public worship is perhaps the most effective means of inculcating particular phase of Christian doctrine; for all these reasons I would consider how much of liberty the individual Minister and Congregation possess as to this function, whether it should be increased or diminished, and what are its only limitations. And I would plead that we do not in our self-will seek either to increase or to diminish that accorded to us or to our brethren, by undertaking to speak what neither Scripture nor Church has spoken.

That the believers in the risen, ascended Christ, should meet in fellowship with His chosen Apostles, and especially on the day of their appointment, the day of His resurrection, to worship Him Whom God had declared both Lord and Christ, was only natural. We may find sufficient explanation of the origin of public Christian worship in the nature of man, and the belief these disciples have learned. Further than this, we must remember that these earliest Christians are members of "the elect

people," whose very bond of national union was kinship to one ancestor and the worship of the God Jehovah, who had made covenant with him.

Now, as baptized confessors of Jesus Christ they believe themselves partakers of a "better covenant, established upon better promises," because they have been made one with Him Who is its Mediator; they are the citizens of a holy nation, they are a royal priesthood, whose bond of union is the kinship not of blood but of faith, and the worship of God in Jesus Christ.

'Tis only natural that we find them, in the great congregation on the Sabbath day, mingling their prayers to Jehovah with those of all the sons of Abraham; that they still rejoice in the assurance of pardon which the flaming burnt-offering gives, and in the perfumed cloud of incense, the symbol of accepted prayer. And with, as yet, no design to separate themselves into a new religious Communion essentially different from that into which they were admitted in infancy; with no thought even to constitute a sect within the National Church;

not yet understanding that their ascended Lord did by His own death make an end of sacrifice, they just as naturally come together, as Christians, to break bread from house to house, as "they continue," as Hebrews, "daily with one accord in the temple." Believing in God manifested in Jesus Christ, they *must* meet to worship Him, even the God into Whose Name of triple Personality they, by commandment of the Lord Jesus, have been baptized.

True, we may find, as the Dean of Norwich has done, the special charter of all public Christian worship in the promise of our Lord, of peculiar efficacy to the prayer wherein even two are agreed, and find therein at the same time the almost necessity, certainly the suggested value, of a prescript form. "If two of you shall agree on earth," the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." * But it has been suggested: "This must be primarily a continuation of the second measure prescribed in cases

* St. Matthew 18 : 19.

of offence, when two or three witnesses were to be called,"* and we do not need such specific warrant for assembling ourselves together. It is the natural, the necessary expression of our common faith, that we come to tell it each to other for mutual help, and that we make it the basis of a common prayer to our common Father; and it was the lesson taught by the divine method of training the religious teachers of the world.

In this our day of literary culture and advanced thought, intellectual fastidiousness is crying out against the homely fare which the Pulpit provides, and professes itself unable to find satisfying refreshment in the "old, old story," because of the lack of skill in him who offers it. Even Christian men are heard excusing their own absence from the Church's worship on the Lord's Day, on the ground that the Press has come into the office once exclusively held by the Pulpit, and that from printed page, in the comfortable quiet of their own Library, they can get more spiritual sustenance

* Lange, Commentary in loco.

than from the sacred Desk in the midst of the Congregation.

May I not remind them that they are doing violence to the Christian instinct, as to the Apostolic precept, in thus refusing to make one of the assembly met in the Lord's house? May I not remind them that to the ear of the loyal, faithful subject of the distant king, the tone and accent and language which tell of the Fatherland must be sweet and attractive, though the speaker have but little art of discourse, though his thought be feeble and incoherent? And may I not bid them consider that like as the natural expression of the Christian heart is, "I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord," even so the refusal to gratify that natural desire is the most effective means possible to prevent its strengthening; and that when the heart no longer cries out for the company of the saved it begins to cease to hope for the vision of the Saviour? Above all, may I not remind them, that though the preached word, foolishness as it seems to the world, is the appointed instru-

ment by which the Holy Ghost will work to convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment ; yet, that the baptized disciples of that earliest day, who must be our exemplars, came not to their upper chamber to hear a Sermon, but to worship Christ ? It was "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."

I say, then, that the assembling of Christian men to worship God in Jesus Christ is natural, and the question at once arises, What shall be the form of such worship? I answer, that plainly the one single peculiar act of Christian worship, as we are taught by the Christian records, and by the devotional exercises of other religions, is the "breaking of bread." A moment's consideration will serve to assure us of this fact. Prayer is as universal as mankind ; the reading of sacred writings, and their exposition by duly appointed officers, have been features of the worship of all the religions in any sense worthy of that name. Even Baptism was clearly a rite of the dispensation of Moses,

and was practiced as part of the initiatory ceremonies admitting to the sacred mysteries of other ancient nations.

The record is of those three thousand baptized on the Day of Pentecost, those first converts made after the Master was gone away, that they "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." Yes, doubtless they longed to know more and more of the heavenly doctrine of which they had learned, but the very first principle, even the resurrection of the crucified Jesus, and therefore they clung eagerly to the men who had been eye-witnesses of His majesty, and "did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead." But they continued as well in "prayers," doubtless the public prayers of the assembled Church, that they might learn how He the Master had taught His disciples to pray; and there is added, "the breaking of bread" as part of their newly learned worship. This leads me to remark, further, that while apparently the public worship of the Church of the early days always included "the breaking

of bread," and that this Communion was administered not only weekly but daily, and perhaps even at every ordinary meal, there is yet no injunction of any Apostle as to the proper frequency of the Ordinance, and just as little direction as to the mode of proceeding in its celebration; indeed, there is not from any Apostle any positive command that it be administered at all. How instructive is this silence as to the wisdom of the founders of what was to be a Catholic Church, fitted in all things to be the spiritual home of "all sorts and conditions of men!" And how full of teaching for us, as to the tolerant concession of liberty in the mere form of expression, if only the substance of the faith be kept intact!

Public Christian worship is, as I have said, a necessary outgrowth of a common belief in the one Lord, but the manner of its performance will be dependent upon the culture and taste of the worshippers, and perhaps more upon the point of doctrinal development they have reached, and the special aspect of the redemptive work which they have

most fully seized. Hence its form will ever be variable, while its idea remains unchanged and unchangeable. As our article expresses it, "It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word."

I have found it profitable, at times, in the presence of the gorgeous ceremonial of some great occasion, to journey, in memory, back to that borrowed room at Jerusalem, where sorrowing disciples are ignorantly listening to the leave-taking of their Master. How different is the seed just being cast into the ground, from this flowering glory we now behold and enjoy! *There* is the familiar unrestraint of mutual affection and confidence; every attitude and every word is the feature of a family reunion, rather than of a solemn function. Did they in any sense realize, I have wondered, these Hebrews who are there, that the simple act of blessing and consuming the bread and wine is

to take the place of their Passover feast, with all its magnificence of ritual; that it is to be the central act of a world's worship?

But I must remember as well that nowhere is like simplicity and familiarity prescribed for the conduct of this Feast by those who shall come after, and that such mode of its celebration were unnatural to us.

Further, I recall that in the only account of the worship of the Apostolic Church, from which we can gain even the least idea of the manner of its performance, St. Paul rebukes the Corinthians for their slovenly disregard of the merely external proprieties. He seems to find in this the evidence of their want of appreciation of the truth of the Sacrament, to which, as cause, he attributes the result, that "many are weak and sickly among you (them), and many sleep."

Now, on the one hand, it seems to me to follow inevitably from such rebuke administered at this time, that the Corinthian Christians cannot have been taught by their father in the Gospel any doctrine of the Lord's Supper which at

all approximates that of the Roman Mass, the Lutheran Miracle, or the High Anglican Presence; for it is inconceivable that men so instructed could so soon have fallen away into such gross irreverence of behavior toward their God, there present under the form of bread and wine.

But, on the other hand, it is just as plain that St. Paul here gives no warrant for what has been called "the piety of irreverence," or for the assumption that absence of "bodily exercise" is irrefragable proof of the activity of the spirit. Most important of all, let us note that here, where it was most naturally to be expected, he gives no Apostolic directory of worship, save only to recite the account he had received of the Lord Jesus, of the institution of the Christian Passover. And this is all: we look in vain through the Scripture history for other, even the least suggestion of what the ritual of the Lord's Supper should be, save only the Lord's "do this," "what and as ye have seen me do." The Apostle seems to promise in his letter that he would give them

more definite instructions when he should come to Corinth. "The rest," he says, "will I set in order when I come." * There were, we must suppose, other irregularities in their manner of keeping the feast, about which he would give authoritative regulation whenever he should be present with them. I cannot help asking, Was he withheld by the Divine Spirit from incorporating these minutiæ in the Letter which was to make part of the Church's "Rule of Faith and Practice"?

The question presents itself boldly at this point, "Why, then, have any Liturgy?" If confessedly there is no record of any possessing Apostolic sanction, then presumably the custom in the Churches founded by the labors of inspired men was for the mode to be determined and provided by the Elder who should be on any occasion thus ministering before the Lord. Doubtless each in conformity to St. Paul's account of "that which he received of the Lord Jesus," would, as part of his Service, recite the words of Institution, as has been the

* 1 Cor. xi. : 34.

custom of all Ministers in every age and of every sect ; but for the rest, why shall not the Elders in every city be free now as then ?

For myself I answer, that to my mind the presumption is rather that each Apostle gave specific directions as to the performance of this duty to the Elders whom he ordained ; for surely, after the experience at Corinth, so wise a man as St. Paul would not have opened wide the floodgates of error in leaving "at the mercy of the individual minister presiding over the congregation at the time of the celebration," a service which "enshrines such a mystery." * I do not say that any form of words is essential to make the Sacrament a valid means of grace, for I find no such condition in Holy Scripture ; but I do say that being our Master's own appointment, for the expression of the common faith of His people in common prayer to Him, for communion with one another, and for receiving the common blessing His grace will bestow, it is natural that prearranged cere-

* Sadler, Liturgies and Ritual, "The Church and the Age," p. 264.

monial shall be its setting, of which His own acts and words at the time of its Institution must be the foundation, but of which the details are variable and to be fixed in every case by the proper authority. In proof that such prearrangement is natural, I note that even if the authority to which he owes allegiance has left to the individual Minister the freedom of *extempore* utterance in this Service, yet in general his own sense of fitness causes that his apparently spontaneous expressions shall be stereotyped.

Now two causes will be operative to effect development of the Liturgy: first, the development of dogma, and the consequent necessary desire and endeavor to express the common belief in the common worship; and, secondly, the æsthetic development and culture of the Priest and the People, and the consequent desire and endeavor to gratify the refined taste, in the acts of religious homage.

It were wandering very far away from my path for me to go into the setting forth of the history of the progress of Christian doctrine in

this particular department, and of the corresponding development of the Liturgy to be its expression. It is a long road from that gathering of the disciples to break bread, when "Paul preached unto them," unto the celebration of High Mass in a Roman cathedral of to-day, where, with all the dramatic surroundings of music and painting, posture and costume, a Priest offers Jesus Christ the Son of God, as unbloody sacrifice to be the propitiation for the sins of the living and the dead; and then in jewelled Monstrance uplifts for the worship of the congregation this Christ thus "visibly set forth, crucified among them." But we may tarry at numerous resting places before we come to this, the very *ultima thule* of sacramental discovery; they are at greatly varying distance from the original starting-point, in doctrine and in its representation; but I would have you mark only this, that in general the departure from the simplicity of Apostolic worship is in exact proportion to increased appreciation of the significance and value of the sacramental act. I say "in general," for, as al-

ready suggested, there has been another cause at work to expedite this progress of liturgical development, which has absolutely no connection with the doctrine which any Liturgy may enfold.

More than this: I would not be understood to say that this increased appreciation of sacramental reality is wholly evil. Clearly our knowledge of Christian truth is in many particulars greater than that of the earliest disciples, and there is no one point as to which this advantage is more palpable than that we are considering. I believe that in the beginning the social aspect of the Holy Supper was largely predominant: that the Agape overshadowed the Communion. The common meal was to them the symbol of their union, in poverty, and in danger of persecution; the κοινωνια had perhaps to their minds, its fullest reference to the "goods" wherein all shared; and the ideas of a symbolic sacrifice, and of a means of grace were obscured; ideas wrapped up in the words of the Christ; ideas which the apprehension of a century later had seized and enshrined in its

Liturgy ; ideas, one of which after generations have exaggerated into a denial of the alone efficacy of the "one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice," "for the sins of the whole world," and the other into a mechanical theory which degrades the conception of spiritual worship, and makes the cultivation of the religious life the working of a machine.

The Liturgy has in every case kept accurate step, with the doctrine, in its march, for they are tied together by closest bond, and each sustains the other. Ornate ritual is hardly possible except it be vivified by a teaching which it symbolizes ; and on the other hand, the doctrine held and taught must find, ought to find, its embodiment in the acts and words of devotion. I remember to have heard of most elaborate ritual being introduced by a Unitarian minister in one of our Western towns, in the administration of a Sacrament which his doctrine, if truly set forth by the author of "Ecce Homo," esteems as only "a club dinner," and naturally the effect was only contemptuous laughter, for there was no

reality within to give life to the outward exhibition. The ritual routine is only as the pictures stained into the window-panes, unmeaning and offensive, whether they be elaborate or simple, until the light behind brings out the colors and the design ; and just as really the light of dogmatic truth must have some ritual screen as softening medium through which it may enter the eye of the beholder, else it shall be painful, and provoke the resistance of the closed eyelid.

But, as I have already suggested, the status of a people in artistic and literary pursuits will be an index, in general, of the level of their liturgical necessities and desires, without any reference to the connection between ritual and dogma. This connection is certainly close, general, indeed almost universal, and yet æsthetic considerations will sometimes produce a ritualistic development which at first sight we may from this observed connection attribute to an "advance" of religious opinion. It is important that we bear this fact in mind, for it is a factor of large value in the problem of

determining the limits of liturgical liberty, and in the formation of the judgments sometimes demanded as to the fact and the extent of the transgression of those limits by an individual Minister or Congregation.

How shall these limits of liturgical freedom be determined? Scripture is confessedly silent; genuine Apostolic traditions, even within the lifetime of the Apostles, were attended by counterfeits which deceived those who had themselves been pupils of the inspired teachers; naturally, necessarily, the Church of each age must fix them, as the Church has fixed them in every period of her history, and we are bound by the decrees of that particular Church by whose authority we stand to minister before God, as the leader of His people's worship.

Beyond controversy, this must be true in the very nature of the case—true for us all, whatever theory of Church government we may accept—whether we be adherents of the loosest system of Congregationalism or of the stiffest theory of Apostolic succession in the Episcopate. We are members of the Catholic Church of Christ,

whatever be our conception of its character, notes, and limits, because we are members of the particular organization into which we were received by baptism, *and not vice versâ*. And if that Body be part of the Catholic Church (and no one would be member of it except he believe it such), it must have exclusive authority in respect to its officers and members, to "ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church, ordained only by man's authority." * The first limit, then, of our individual liturgical liberty is the obligation to conform to the worship of that Church whereof we are members and ministers.

But, secondly, the Church herself is limited in the exercise of her power by the truth whereof she is the "witness and keeper," so that in the liturgical legislation or appointment "nothing be ordained against God's word," and "so that all things be done to edifying."

Then also of necessity this obligation, resting upon a "particular church" to decree nothing as ceremonial which shall possibly convey to the

* "XXXIX. Articles of Religion," Art. xxxiv.

beholder or the worshipper other conception of God, or of the means of securing part of His salvation than that set forth in Holy Scripture ; and the obligation to put immediate end to such false representation made in her name and with her apparent sanction ;—these must rest as truly upon the conscience of the individual man or minister. And he must find as real ground for refusal to conform, in a decreed ordinance which to him pictures falsehood, as in the decreed dogma which in words asserts what he believes to be untrue. Truth first, and then authority—these the limits of our liberty in the matter of public worship.

And, further, in the exercise of this sovereign authority the Church of the age must regard the wisdom of those who possessed the special divine guidance to which she can lay no claim, and thankfully receive and follow the advice given by their practice, to set up no standards of worship as immutable. But rather, having regard to the ever-changing conditions of man's life, to the rise and fall of philosophic systems, and the consequent modifications of the forms

of theological statement ; to the progress of art and the resulting modifications of devotional expression, she will expect the demand for liturgical enrichment and liturgical freedom, a demand expressed most often by seeming violation of existing law ; and finally, in the wise concession to such demand, shall "all things be done to edifying."

These are the principles on which, as it seems to me, the question, "How shall we worship God?" must always receive answer in every age and from every Church. Let us now endeavor their application to the present condition of that venerable and Apostolic Communion whereof we are members.

We hear on every hand that with us this is a day of lawlessness ; that rubrics are dead letters ; that the "godly admonitions" of the Bishops, rarely spoken, are without effect, because the author of the admonition has no power to compel compliance ; that, in a word, the Church's Ritual law is such a mass of incoherency that obedience is not possible, and disobedience not a fault. One of our most

venerable Bishops has published, in his Charge to his Diocese, that the day is come when every man does, liturgically, what is right in the sight of his own eyes ; and he seems to express his satisfaction in such condition of things. I can hardly consent that such is fair description, and yet I am perfectly aware that the violations of our Ritual-law are frequent, on the right hand and on the left, by omission and by commission, by defect and by excess. I am quite prepared to be satisfied with some of these violations, and to find in them no disloyalty to the Church, but only the demand for larger liberty, that "all things may be done to edifying." To me many of these violations are but the action of the giant rousing up from his sleep of self-indulgence to recognize the battle that is before him, and shaking himself free from the withes of obsolete injunctions, which are dead and dry and cannot bind his strength, despite their apparent freshness and beauty. Yes, men and brethren, in my judgment the rubrical offences whereof in some quarters outcry is made, and whose chief value to the

offended is that they are offset and defence for their own departures in the opposite direction, are just the failure to try to force the living, growing Church of Christ in this land, into a mould which was fashioned for other material under other circumstances, and the failure to insist that if it will not consent to be thus circumscribed in its development it shall not grow at all.

Let me give you an illustrative example. I remember the experience of an earnest Clergyman in a great city, who, desiring to give opportunity to the business men for Lenten prayer and meditation, advertised that there would be a "half-hour service" in his Church, which was situated close to the busiest mart of the city, each day at noon. The Ordinary being informed, in answer to inquiry, that the purpose was to read the Litany and make a short address, said that he could not do so unless he should theretofore say the Order for Morning Prayer, either in the Church or in his own Study.

I thank God that I can believe that the day

for such mad consistency is past, and that such slavish subservience to the letter of the Rubric would not be possible now. The "Rubric of Common Sense," as it has been called, has come to be understood as a necessary rule for the interpretation of the Book of Common Prayer, as of any other such document. But alas! this is the evil of our present condition: these violations of the Church's Order in particulars wherein necessity or manifest expediency constrains that the law be ignored, committed with implied or even explicit consent of the Church authority, are made excuse or defence of other violations of the Church's Order, which are at the same time violations of the Church's truth. A man who shakes his dusty door-mat in front of his house, and a man who attempts to take the life of his neighbor, are in one sense and in some cities equally violators of the law, for it as plainly prohibits one action as the other. And yet the one prohibition is based upon regard for the comfort of the citizens, and the other upon the sanctity of a God-given life, and only a most disingenuous special pleading

could defend the crime by comparing it as a violation of law with the misdemeanor. But this distinction seems to be often utterly ignored in the formation of judgments, by individuals, about ecclesiastical offences. Because one man neglects to say, "Peace be to this house," as he enters the abode of his sick parishioner, therefore another is to be justified in mutilating the Office for infant baptism that it may not speak to the Congregation the doctrine which the Church has plainly set forth in her Articles; and another must be suffered to uplift the elements of the Holy Communion, and to do before them every act that is naturally expressive of worship, though the Church has declared, as plainly as words can declare, that she teaches no such doctrine of the precious gift of the "spiritual food and sustenance."

I would not seem to be a partisan; I would not be understood as pleading for liberty for one school of thought in the Church, and for the greater repression of another; but I must emphasize the radical difference between violations of the fundamental Protestant truth of

the Church, of the doctrine which was the very inspiration of the Reformation, and the adequate occasion for martyr death, and violations of mere prescriptions of proper ministerial performance, whose neglect and regard are alike insignificant in the inculcation of truth or error. More than this: I would emphasize the fact that the very existence of difference of opinion upon any point makes the more obligatory the faithful and accurate use of the words of the formula having reference to that point; that, permitted to wander at will over wide field of opinion, we must, just because of the permission, the more certainly return to the rendezvous.

Now, when we come to examine the Standards of the Church upon the subject of the Sacraments, we may perhaps, some of us, be amazed to find the large liberty of opinion which is allowed, and that no positive definition of the nature of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper has been therein promulgated. I mean, you will of course understand, the Standards of this Church, and not the recorded lucubrations

of the individual Doctors who, within the liberty thus accorded, have furnished definitions hard and positive, often, alas! married to exclusive denunciations of "no-churchmanship" against those who in the exercise of the same liberty have reached other conclusions.

The Protestant Episcopal Church proclaims, with no uncertain voice, that the Lord's Supper is a veritable "means of grace"; that it "is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves, one to another, but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ, and likewise the Cup of blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ." She declares in express terms that "Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of the bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord) cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions."

She declares that "the Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner," and that "the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith." But just as plainly she declares that "sacraments are certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in Him." Finally, she asserts that "the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped."

Let these quotations suffice to exhibit the salient points of the doctrine which this Church has gathered from Holy Scripture touching this subject. A volume and not a lecture, a lifetime and not an hour, were needed to give you the barest outline of the scriptural proof and of the historical development. But our concern now is with the Ritual in which this doctrine shall be embodied, and of the permissibility of departure from the appointed Order.

I would maintain, first of all, that *because* there is legitimate variety of opinion about the nature and efficacy of the Sacrament, that therefore there shall be closest conformity to the appointed Order ; and secondly, I would plead that, due regard being paid to this literal requirement, there shall be kindest judgment and self-compelled silence as to the difference of opinion. But I hold that the Church should give a liberty of Ritual, a defined and regulated liberty, corresponding to the freedom of opinion which she has accorded. Why shall the arrangements of the Ritual of even this most sacred Office, completed in a time of turmoil and confusion, when the martyr fires still smouldered, and when anxious fear still trembled lest the old enemy should regain the possession from which he had been with such difficulty expelled—why shall these be continued of necessity without change, for us who "were free born," who ought to be able to look unappalled at the history of Papal usurpation and of scholastic dogmatizing, and stand firm in the old paths? Especially must the minute directions as to

posture, which were necessary for the guidance of every motion of the Rome-bred priest, to keep him out of the rut of the Roman Missal—must these continue to be a burden to the mind and conscience of the Priest of to-day, who is proudly conscious of his integrity, and intelligent loyalty to the Church's Standards of doctrine? Must these remain because there is like danger now, as in the old time? Then let them be made *more* explicit, and impossible of misinterpretation. Plainly, even in this Office for the administration of the highest, holiest act of our worship, we need more detail of direction, or less. Either take away these petty occasions of rubrical stumbling and fault-finding, or make them of such rugged prominence that the blindest will see them and avoid; and make it at the same time impossible for the ignorant or careless tripping to become the defence of the deliberate masking of the Church's fair face by the omission or the addition thus justified. We need liturgical enrichment, for we need liturgical freedom, which is wealth.

Ritual legislation, rubrical revision, I believe

to be the crying need of the Church to-day ; and I hail with thankful delight the appointment and the assembling of that Commission of learned men to whom this matter has by the Church been given in charge. May they give us a scheme which shall be, first of all, intelligible by all, and of no easy misinterpretation ; a scheme which shall make plainly lawful varied services suited to the differing tastes and capacities of our people, and which shall make as plainly unlawful the denial by Ritual act, or by a garbling of the words of worship, of the truth which we have as Dogma in Articles, and in Homilies as Exhortation.

Will some man say in reply, that legislation is dangerous because thereby our liberty may be made less, and the present condition is better when each does what seemeth him good ? Nay, but conscience often restrains from what judgment esteems expedient, because of the Church's law ; Bishops must do by connivance, or by supposed inherent right, what they feel and know ought to be done, while yet they feel and know as well, that under our law their

right to make alteration in the established Order, save on certain specified occasions and under certain specified circumstances, is no more than that of the humblest Presbyter.

On the other hand, this faculty of individual revision, given by supposed general consent, by recognized laxity of the law, may be exercised after this fashion in shortening the form of exhortation giving notice of the administration of the Holy Communion—omit the words "to be by them received in remembrance of His meritorious cross and passion," and thus make the Church declare that it is "the most comfortable sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, . . . *whereby alone* we obtain remission of our sins and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven."

I say therefore that we need legislation in the interest of liberty—liberty in all directions for the truth's expression—that the consciences of good men may have relief, that obstructions in the path of the Church's progress among Americans may be removed, and that honest misinterpretation concerning non-essentials, or

lazy indifference as to rules of mere propriety, may no longer give occasion for the justified expression of misinterpretation, honest or dishonest, ignorant or designing, concerning things essential and vital.

To return for illustration to the Ritual of the Lord's Supper, which as the central act of our public worship, as the Liturgy proper, will ever determine the characteristics of the mode in which other sacred offices will be celebrated, is any increase of liberty possible here? How shall there not be, in view of the wide comprehension by the Article, of theories having in common only the acceptance of the fact that He who gave His Son to die for our sins hath also given Him "to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that Holy Sacrament"; the denial of Presence other than spiritual and heavenly; the affirmation that "Faith is the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten," and the repudiation of reservation, carrying about, lifting up, and worshipping, as in any sense proper accessories to the act of Communion?

Grant that to me the Office in our Prayer Book for the administration of the Holy Communion is not only most precious heritage which I have received from my fathers, is not only hallowed by the recollections of my childhood's awe, and by the tenderest associations of my life, but also that it contains for me fullest expression, in most perfect proportion, of the truths wrapped up in that one peculiar act of Christian devotion; grant that therefore I find fullest benefit and highest spiritual pleasure in the administration of the ordinance just as it is there set down, in every least particular; is it therefore certain that this must be true of all men? Can I not understand that, from one cause or another, difference of taste or of habit of mind, a shorter form may be more helpful to others; or at the least, that they may honestly long for the liberty for its curtailment on occasion? What parish clergyman has not felt the need for such liberty of shortening this Service for the relief of the sick and the dying, who, earnestly desirous to receive this visible material pledge of the Saviour's love, can yet only

with most painful difficulty undergo the fatigue of body and mind necessary to intelligent participation in the entire Office?

Again, why shall the musical taste and skill, largely developed in one congregation, be shut up to that measure of musical utterance, as is perhaps a requirement all beyond the capacity of comfortable rendering possessed by another? Why shall not the idea of mystery, which confessedly is inherent in this act of worship, be fully set forth in the Ritual of those to whom this thought is fullest of helpful blessing, provided only that safeguards protect from the representation of any Presence other than spiritual and heavenly? And why shall a Service, whose words are often unmeaning, and its construction unappreciated, be the compulsory performance of simple-minded ignorance which comes to the "breaking of bread," as possibly the earliest disciples came, simply to remember, and to be helped to remember, the death that was died for them, and to whom the idea of mystery being connected with what they do is inconceivable?

Is it helpful to some to have the sacrificial aspect of the Lord's Supper made prominent, the showing of the Lord's death unto the Eternal Father, and the pleading in act of the merits of His cross and passion, even as in words they make petition, "for the sake of Jesus Christ," why shall it not be made explicitly lawful, and in being made lawful the "showing forth" be so ordered, that not by any possibility "the dangerous fable and blasphemous deceit" of a propitiatory sacrifice may find a lodgment in the mind or heart of the worshipper?

"No one," says Prebendary Sadler, "unless he believes that Christ can die over and over again, can hold that the sacrificial action of the Eucharist is in its essence more than commemorative, and no one can hold that it is less." * "No matter how differently they may express themselves," he says, immediately before the passage above quoted, "the Ultramontane and the ultra-Protestant, when their words

* Liturgies and Ritual, "The Church and the Age," p. 281.

come to be sifted, are here at one." But if the word "express" in the last sentence may be made to include Ritual action as well as spoken forms of belief, the statement manifestly is not true, for with pain and shame be it confessed, in these days of lawless individualism, in which some of us are supposed to rejoice, there may be found Priests ministering under the authority of the Protestant Episcopal Church whose expression of sacrificial act can with difficulty be distinguished, by an uneducated eye, from that of him who blasphemously deceives the people with claim to offer sacrifice, which is propitiation for the sins of the living and the dead.

But finally on this point, shall provision be made, ought provision to be made, in our Ritual law for liberty to express our homage to the Divine Humanity come after the words of Priestly consecration, to the tabernacle of bread and wine, because many (shall I say "many"?) assert that the highest blessing they receive at the Holy Communion is in the worship of the Present Christ? The answer is inevitable, that

there cannot be given liberty for the expression of a worship which the Church in her formulary of doctrine has pronounced unlawful. And yet ceremonial is to-day a regular use in churches of this Communion—ceremonial which means this if it means anything, but which Bishops are powerless to stop, because it cannot be canonically *proven* that it symbolizes "erroneous or doubtful doctrines."

For example, how can it ever be proven that the elements in the Holy Communion have been elevated "in such manner as to expose them to the view of the people, *as objects* toward which adoration *is to be made*"? And yet, is it not notorious that such elevation as has been practiced does to the average beholder symbolize a Presence that is worshipped, and ought to be worshipped?

Again, says the author of the Essay on "Liturgies and Ritual," from which I already quoted: "It is clear that Jerome excuses the lighting of lamps in the day time as a pardonable weakness. . . . He mentions at the conclusion of his remarks on this matter that the Oriental

Church lighted lamps—not however at the Consecration, but at the reading of the Gospels, at which time common-sense seems to teach us that if lighted candles be used symbolically at all, they are far more appropriate, for there must be a certain order and discrimination in symbolical teaching. . . . Again, if we look to the Eucharist as a sacrificial commemoration, candles seem altogether out of place, for they have nothing, even remotely, to do with sacrifice."*

Shall we, too, not suffer the candles to cast their pale light upon this act of our worship, excusing their use "as a pardonable weakness"? But alas! no matter that as symbol they have no fitness for such service, and are absolutely insignificant, yet to the average American mind they symbolize Romanism, and deny the witness for which the Reformers went gladly to the stake that they might there light that candle which, by the grace of God, we must take care shall never be put out.

So, too, of the use of incense, which, even

* Liturgies and Ritual, the Church and the Age, p. 308.

according to Roman Catholic decision, has no symbolical or dogmatic bearing whatever with respect to the Eucharist, for the Mass is in the vast majority of cases celebrated without it. Yet is it not true that to the mind of our countrymen and of our age it is not the symbol of acceptable prayer but of Roman worship?

In respect to the chalice of mingled water and wine, perhaps the same difficulty might arise were the act of mingling a part of the public Service, and not, as always in the ancient time, done in private before the solemnity begins. Surely no one can object that the lover of symbolism shall thus recall to mind the double stream which flowed from the wounded side.

So, too, in my judgment, about what are called the "sacrificial vestments"; if it please the Priest or his people that he wear them, who shall object, for most assuredly we have no law to guide, and the people—I mean the people who are not of us, but whom we are sent to win,—find just as little, and just as much cause for wonder in the alb and chasuble, as in the

surplice, and possibly a colored stole evokes their surprise no more than a black one.

Am I talking of things indifferent, things unworthy of your thought and mine? Nay, is it beneath us to consider even the smallest causes of division in our Body, and of slackened speed in our advance to occupy the land?

But do I seem to be advocating the liberty of only those with whom I may be supposed most nearly to agree? God forbid that it be so! No, I only assert that Ritual must be expression of Doctrine, that the limits of the one determine those of the other, only these, but certainly these. I believe that because of the lack of sufficient definition these limits are overstepped, and the truth receives the hurt. And yet I believe that there is abundant room for the gratification of every taste, and the symbolizing of every phase of the accepted doctrine. Timid, it may be morbid, conscience is restrained, and the bolder rushes to transgression—it may be of mere Order, it may be of Order involving doctrine—and straightway there is accusing and excusing. Diocesan au-

thority is silent because powerless, or if it speaks its sense of the radical difference between offences, sincere conviction sometimes, and sometimes disingenuous evasion, makes clamor of persecution and partisanship. Such our condition : is there not a cause that we seek its improvement ?

But I know that answer will be made to much that I have been saying, somewhat as follows : The people must be educated, the Prayer Book must be their educator, and their ignorance must not be suffered to be the gauge of the Forms of devotion we offer them.

True, that the Prayer Book is a mighty educator ; true, that as a missionary it has done great work among the poorest and the most illiterate, and yet equally true it is that only by the application of the Rubric of common-sense has its educating influence ever been brought to bear.

But in regard to those points to which I have made special reference — namely, the different aspects of the Holy Communion, the people can be but very slowly lifted up to the

conceptions which are set forth, often only by suggestion, in the Liturgy; lifted up from the idea of mere sympathetic remembrance to the realization of spiritual communion. I would give liberty for the employment of means to help this uplifting, chiefly by the shortening of the Service. But, mark you, however far they may have attained, the masses of our people will never be rid, and they ought never to be rid, of their horror of Rome and its enslaving system. You cannot educate them into tolerance of the similitude of Roman ritual, and it is worse than a mistake—it is a crime—for the sake of a blind æsthetic devotion to a symbolism which Rome has degraded, and which only by largest explanation can ever be made to do honor to the truth, to risk the repelling from the Catholic Church, and still more from the Catholic truth of the Gospel, men and women who can see only Romanism in the genuflexion and prostration, the burning candle and the smoking censer.

Shall I be told that like mistake and prepossession oppose the introduction of any liturgi-

cal form, and that the people we must teach are equally scandalized by surpliced Choir and Priest, by written sermon and cross-capped spire? I answer, *a* mistake and prepossession in regard to all our peculiarities does stand in the way, but not of like character or of equal strength. The mental inertia and bodily sloth of men will always be reasons for unwillingness to take part in a religious worship involving bodily and mental activity, and these natural instincts have been cultivated to the utmost by the forms, or want of forms, of worship, in which the larger part of our countrymen have been educated. But their love of the ease they have been accustomed to enjoy is not *like* their love of the truth of the risen Christ in which they have learned to believe; their antipathy to "prayers out of a book" is not *like* their hatred of Roman arrogance and monkery, which are to their minds all represented in the mysterious movements of the Priest at his Altar.

But I believe that the Book of Common Prayer, as I have already suggested, is, not-

withstanding our lost opportunities and our suicidal want of harmony, a very magnet which is attracting toward our Communion multitudes of that ever-increasing number of educated people in our land, and that it is beloved as their only teacher by men and women everywhere, to whom the advantages of other instruction were never given. There is no insuperable obstacle in the way of educating the people up to this highest form of the public worship of God, if it be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, Whom we ask them to worship, and there be not a suspicion that prayer and praise are to be addressed to One who is brought near to them by the working of ecclesiastical miracle.

And now, for a very little while, suffer me to speak touching the liberty to be accorded in the performance of divine worship other than that in the administration of the Eucharist. Because the most precious jewel of our treasure-house is therein deposited, our anxiety will be most cautious as to any proposed changes in the setting, lest thereby the rays of truth from

some one of the many sides shall not be reflected, and the blessing they bring be lost. This danger cannot be so great in any other case, and our conservative timidity cannot so readily find excuse.

Thank God, the days are past when every Clergyman felt bound in good conscience to begin with "Dearly beloved brethren" at every meeting of Christians, and no matter what the emergency, to go straight through to the Apostolic grace before a word of exhortation could be spoken, or even a pressing question of Parish business discussed! And yet the binding rules are just as tightly fastened, and even at our last General Convention there was refusal on the part of one branch of our legislature to consent to any loosening.

Everybody —Bishop, Priest, Deacon, and Layman—knows very well that the Order for Daily Morning and Evening Prayer is *not* said *daily* in many churches, and *ought not* to be said daily, *under present circumstances.* Everybody knows just as well that the appointed routine of service is *not* followed, *always* "before *all*

sermons and lectures," and that it ought not to be. And yet there is the law upon the statute-book, a *brutum fulmen*, serving no purpose but to bring into disrepute the Vulcan who forged it, and the Jupiter by whose hand it was hurled. No, I mistake ; it serves other purpose as well : it is a burden to the conscience of some good men, under which they stagger in their going to and fro with the message of salvation ; and, worse still, in being the demand for an impracticable conformity, it is the suggestion of an untrammelled license, and so of an equalization of all offences against its terms. We need clearly settled liberty in the non-essentials of our worship, for the very protection of that which is most sacred and most precious.

Now, granting that the Church's doctrine is safely guarded in her Sacramental Offices, as to which liberty of use must be granted with greater caution, why shall the ordained Presbyter of this Church, the man who has passed the ordeal of entrance, and has sworn the oaths of faithful ministration of doctrine and discipline

and worship—why shall he not be trusted with a discretion as to the doings at the ordinary assemblings of his people for prayer and praise ; and still more, when he goes as Missionary to minister to those to whom our ancient forms of devotion are new and strange ; who, it may be, never saw a Prayer Book, and seeing it could not read nor understand it? We cannot but assume that he will love best to worship in the appointed Order, and that like disposition will be characteristic of the regularly organized Congregation of the Church. We must assume also that the Minister will not run counter to the wishes of his people in this matter. Now, grant that the law shall suffer no departure from the prescribed form at Services on the Lord's Day in places duly set apart for the celebration of Divine Service, yet why shall not the Minister be given explicit discretion to do what he finds most expedient on other and extraordinary occasions? I will go so far as to ask, what result other than good can come from the social informal meeting of Churchmen for prayer and praise, under the presidency and

direction of the educated ordained servant of the Church, even though no official robe shall distinguish the Elder from his brethren, and the words which are spoken to the All-hearing Father are but the crude, spontaneous utterance which tries to tell the thoughts and desires of the heart? You answer that the disgraceful scenes witnessed at such gatherings are sufficient, more than sufficient, reason for our refusal to permit other than liturgical worship on any occasion, and ought to be rebuke of the suggestion of its allowance. And I rejoin that perhaps the Church's failure to direct and control these natural manifestations of the social religious feeling, which must be ancient, primitive, Apostolic, because they are natural, may be explanation of their degradation, because suffered to fall into the hands of incompetency; as it may also be one explanation of how the Church came to lose the privilege of being the religious educator of the masses. Further, I must add that in many Congregations of this Church throughout the land, which have been distinguished for largest possession of mission-

ary zeal and activity, this agency has been employed with mighty effect by the Minister, despite the prohibitions of the Canon.

On the other hand, if there be, as undoubtedly there are, a large number of men and women in the Church, equally earnest in their devotion to their Lord, who are best pleased and most helped to worship God with elaborate ceremonial; who would have the Choir and Clergy approach the sacred place in solemn procession, marching under the standard of the uplifted cross, and singing, as they march, the song of exultant victorious hope; who love best that prayers be sung in restful monotone, and that the shouted "Amens" speed their flight to the throne—why shall they be forbidden thus to offer the sacrifice of their lips?

But further, and most important of all, I ask, why shall the worshipper at the Prayer-meeting, rather than the worshipper at the Choral Service, be denounced as "no-churchman," or *vice versâ*, when of the plain letter of our law each Service is as palpable violation as the other? Herein, as it seems to me, is one larg-

est evil of our present condition, that Churchmanship is being measured by a rule which has no possible application, and that ignorance or inconsiderateness is busy imputing disloyalty because of mere difference of interpretation, or of taste, or of judged expediency. I would that in every one of our great cities there might be a Church wherein the Service should be rendered with all the adjuncts of ritual beauty and glory, and yet wherein the keenest scrutiny of partisan anxiety could discover no feature of any system save purest "Evangelicalism," that so the mind of all our people might be disabused of the impression that Choral music is the necessary vehicle of one particular phase of Church doctrine, and that the churchmanship of a Minister is to be determined by the proportion in which singing and reading are mingled in his Service.

And so I would that in every city some of the men who are recognized as "extreme" in their churchmanship would inaugurate the social, informal Prayer-meeting, as one agency of their manifold activity, that the false union

between a form of prayer and a system of doctrine might be proven arbitrary and unreal ; for so I believe one large occasion for stumbling, one mighty provocative to harsh judgment and evil speaking, were taken away.

Of course I know very well that this has been done long ago in the Church of England, and that their disagreements in regard to Ritual are still fiercer than ours. Perhaps, I venture to say, the connection between Church and State enters there as controlling factor to disturb the solution of the problem, which is possible to us, as certainly the extreme results of their disagreement, which will now intensify its bitterness and make less possible its healing, can never be seen in America. But, mark you, those results are from alleged violations of the integrity of the Church's truth, and not of mere Order.

I know, too, that answer will be made to my words, that the tendency of such allowed liberty is dangerous. The lover of ritual-observance will fear that people permitted ever to worship without its restraints will at

last find them irksome at all times. And he who believes in only simplest form will dread lest Choral Service lead directly and inevitably to eucharistic adoration. Ah, friends! the argument from tendency, the argument from our fears, will put effectual stop to all progress, and be prohibition of all liberty. The tendency of a republic, the political philosophers tell us, and history seems to prove it, is toward mob rule and communism ; and yet that tendency we have withstood for a century, and the outlook is fairer than ever before in man's political history for centuries more of well-regulated liberty, without the presence of a standing army or the accumulation of a centralized power.

The tendency of Low-Churchmen, we have been hearing all our lifetime, is toward Geneva, and that of their High-Church neighbors toward Rome ; and yet they dwell together now more closely than perhaps ever before, and neither Calvin's seat nor Leo's is crowded with the tendency-driven exiles. Certainly tendencies exist in every organism, toward one point or

another of development, but not always so irresistible as to make proper that freedom be destroyed lest they be suffered to become operative, the freedom which is necessary that the organism may accomplish its proper functions, and be a joy and not a sorrow to itself.

But, further: natural tendency, restrained unlawfully, in the judgment of him who feels the repression, is thereby quickened into more eager pursuit of its extreme result. If I am ever being taunted with the reproach that I belong to Geneva or to Rome, it will be but natural for me to constantly make nearer approach to my asserted final resting-place.

Therefore I urge that while our liberty continues undefined, we shall use nicest discrimination in forming our judgments and in stating them. For the man who as steward gives to the hungry household a stone instead of the bread the Great Householder has provided, and by disingenuous artifice persuades its acceptance, for his actions we can make no excuse, save only that charity shall strive to hope "all things" of possible explanation, and to believe

"all things" of possible ignorance, rather than believe that consciously he is violating his vow, "to instruct the people committed to his charge, out of the Scriptures, and to teach nothing as necessary to eternal salvation, but what he is persuaded may thereby be concluded and proved." To ritual act which teaches the unlearned, however it may be explained to theologians, that the Sacrament is a sacrifice propitiatory for the sins of the living and the dead, and that men must adore Christ present on the Altar under the form of bread and wine, we can, as loyal Churchmen, give nor countenance nor consent; and to the omission of word or deed, which shall put partisan interpretation upon the Church's Offices, which are the Articles of our concord, we can give only distinctest disapprobation.

But in reference to the multitude of variations in the conduct of our public worship, not possibly, or certainly not plainly, involving denial or obscuring of vital truth, variations in general wholly dependent upon the taste and habits of the worshippers, let us learn to be

tolerant and silent if we cannot learn to even courteously conform to the innocent, though to us novel customs of those whose worship we have joined.

The time will come when things now by many esteemed unwarrantable shall be explicitly authorized, and so terms of reproach now often spoken will have their occasion taken away. Churchmanship will be shown some day to have no connection with, or proper measure in, questions of insignificant ceremony. Things new and old we will be suffered to bring out of the ritual treasure, equally valuable whether new or old, if they are efficient to excite and to express the true worship of the Father for the men of our time; and equally worthless, whether new or old, if unfitted for profitable use by our countrymen.

Till then we must be governed as to these matters by an enlightened Church opinion; let us use wise discrimination in its formation. Let us always remember that our worship is first to proclaim what is true, decreed to be true by the authority to which we owe and

have professed subjection ; it is to be the common expression of the common belief ; and then, that for it there is due and prescribed Order, to be interpreted by common-sense. Therefore, there will be an analogy to which our judgments must conform in estimating the enormity of departures from that rule. I do plead earnestly that this analogy receive due consideration, for by its disregard the weight of our judgment with those whom we wish to influence is made *nil.*

To place on the same level, for example, the mere ornamentation which a florid taste enjoys, and the prostration or other posture which ungracefully announces the supernatural Presence to be worshipped ; to seem to look upon the Choral singing of the Service as part and parcel of a system whose corner-stone is at the seven-hilled city ; to lazily consent that the refusal to pronounce the Church's declaration of new life and new hope to the waiting heart of the mother whose child has been baptized, is only on a par with the failure to read all of the long exhortation each time the Holy Com-

munion is administered ; this is to destroy the value of our judgment with those who seek it, and to drive the inquirer to inconsiderate acceptance of all as alike good, because we have taken away the distinction, by our assertion that they are alike evil.

I believe, after some opportunity for examination of the question, which opportunity I have tried to improve, that perhaps a majority, certainly a large proportion of the regular attendants upon the services of the few ultra-ritualistic Churches in this country, are quite indifferent to the distinguishing characteristics of the doctrine therein taught. Some of these persons attend a Church of this kind because it is free, and a larger number because of the hearty Congregational Choral worship which they enjoy. They love the sugar-coating, and take the drug it disguises, in many cases without any appreciable effect. Remonstrance of old friends against their adherence to the party they have joined is often met in the way I have just now indicated. The mode of Service they find a comfort and a blessing,

and the other peculiarities cannot be evil, if, as decided by the judgment of the remonstrant, they are part and parcel of the same system, and no more evil than the Service they love.

But as my last word, I entreat that discrimination may be our companion when we come to deal on this subject with the newly convinced hearer who would confess his belief. He has learned to accept Jesus as the Son of God ; he would call upon Him in Whom he has believed ; he would join the Apostles' fellowship, that he may learn more of their doctrine ; he would be privileged partaker of their "breaking of bread and prayers." About him are men whom he sees to be equally active in the work of their Master, equally influenced by "the same Spirit," but among them there are wide "differences of administration" concerning these things. He comes to ask where and with whom he may have fellowship in the breaking of bread and prayers : what answer shall we give ? Shall I fill his mind with partisan theories, and his heart with suspicion of my brother who calls upon the Lord with other

tones than mine, or who breaks the bread, as it seems to me, with unbecoming irreverence and familiarity? Shall I bid him beware the Church wherein the voices of white-robed boys swell the pealing anthem, or point out the "unchurchliness" of the irregular performances in the Lecture-room on the Wednesday evening? God help us to be wise and charitable, that we plant not the seeds of ecclesiastical hate!

We will teach the young disciple what we ourselves believe to be "the truth as it is in Jesus"—yes, what the Scripture plainly asserts, or what the Church has set forth; that as we understand it, we must teach; but for the rest, these matters of taste, these adiaphora of which I have been talking, whose discussion is yet so fierce that in its din the Gospel message is sometimes caused to be inaudible, God help us to be charitable and discriminating, and to teach that though Ritual may and often does set forth another Gospel which we must avoid, yet that the believer in Jesus may worship Him, with equal sincerity and equal truth, in many different modes.

LECTURE IV.

Discrimination as to Recreation and Amusement.

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DISCRIMINATION AS TO RECREATION AND AMUSEMENT.

"Who gave himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."—TITUS II : 14.

ST. PAUL writes to the Overseer of the Church in Crete, that the effect of believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth must be the sanctification of the believing confessor. He says that the indwelling Spirit of Jesus Christ will be visibly manifested in a conferred peculiarity, consisting in separation from iniquity and zealous endeavor after good works. Possibly the changed value of the word "peculiar" has given occasion for misunderstanding of his demand, and for an often absurd effort to meet it. When here written as the full equivalent of the Apostle's expression, the word signified "over and above,"

"occupying position separate and peculiar, like one's *peculium* or special treasure." * It had not then acquired its new but natural meaning of "singular and unlike anything else," and the English Christian of King James' day was as little liable, as the Cretan to whom the original letter came, to be deceived into supposing that singularity of costume or of speech was necessary part of the peculiarity which is made up of separation from sin and zeal for well-doing.

It seems to me that nowhere has this error been so widely prevalent, and nowhere has the misconception lived so long, as in the sphere of recreation or amusement, and the words of the great Teacher of the Gentiles furnish fullest text of the thoughts about these matters that I would present.

I said in my first Lecture that my reason for desiring thus to apply the principle of necessary discrimination in this department is that I believe we are, in reference to what are called "popular amusements," standing on ground that is wholly untenable. And I believe that

* Fairbairn, "Com." in loc.

therefore naturally we are unable to persuade men to come and stand with us, and so as result, because no refuge is offered to which they can consent to repair, they dwell without in unprotected freedom and in dangerous unrestraint. Confessedly the condition of the Christian Church, using the word Church in its largest possible application, is to-day lamentable in this respect. Christian people of every name, whether educated under influences of Puritan severity or of Catholic liberality, the descendants of the adherents of Wesley's method, and I almost dare to say, even in this community, of George Fox's complicated simplicity, are alike with one accord the indiscriminate patrons of the play-house and the ball-room; and the exceptions to this rule, to be found in any Denomination of Christians, are greeted with stare of surprise at their peculiarity, like that which once opened its wide eyes at the apparition of the long straight coat and the broad-brimmed hat; and, in the judgment of the young beholder, their refusal to conform to the custom of the day, to the hab-

its of his fashionable society, whatever be its grade, is just as unreasonable and its exhibition as absurd as was the refusal of those old-time worthies to be conformed to the world in the garb of their bodies or of their thoughts. Of course I know very well that in every community and in every Denomination of Christian people there are numerous exceptions to this rule, which is yet increasingly general, but they usually belong to the generation rapidly passing away, and they look with amazed and scornful impotence at the rushing tide which they cannot stop, which is sweeping away all the traditions of the past. If the children of their families be kept during childhood within the straitest bounds of the old-time severity, they can but grieve to recognize that only this compulsion is the efficient restraint, and that in the heart of son and daughter there is evidently the complaining sense of wrong, that in their life there is none of the gayety and joy which make glad the life of their companions. And, childhood passed, the weight of parental authority removed, there is but too often the bound of

the released spring to the utmost limit of possible departure, and the boyhood of enforced abstinence becomes in a day, the young manhood of prodigal pleasure. I do not know that in this respect our age is peculiar and without predecessor ; perhaps it has always been so in the history of mankind ; perhaps the swing of the pendulum must ever be the fullest illustration of the development of our race ; perhaps in accordance with that principle we in America are but passing through the period of the Restoration as following and reacting from that of the Commonwealth, in that the accumulation of wealth, the development of luxury, now make for us a royal leisure which must be filled with the new delights which were unknown in the early days of our country's settlement, and impossible to the uncultivated simplicity of the pioneer period.

I think that it may be both interesting and profitable to consider for a little while the causes of this our present condition in this regard, for in discovering the causes of the disease we may learn something of the remedy

to be administered with best hope of healing.

I note first, then, that in the position assumed, touching this matter of recreation and amusement, by the phase of Christianity described as "Puritan," which was as we know the peculiar form of religion first established in that large part of our country which has been perhaps most influential in giving moral and social and religious complexion to the whole land, there was an almost ignoring of the need for amusement innate in human nature. Let us remember that this religion of the Independents was the stern protest of men of faith in unseen realities, against the degradation of the Church of Christ, into a principality appended to an earthly kingdom, into a mere Department of State. It was their protest against the spiritual worship of God being made an unreal ritual-drill; their protest against the religion of Jesus being a solace for immoral life, provided in miracles wrought by impure hands; their protest against the enforced acceptance of a creed, a worship, a ritual, not plainly revealed

of God ; above all, it was their protest against a tyrant whose shame was upheld by a theory of divine right, which theory was part of the enforced creed.

Mark you, I would not be considered the defender of the Puritans. I can see, as I think, perhaps as much of carnal-minded craft in the leader who beheaded Charles as of weak-minded sensuality in his royal victim. But now I would note how natural it is that in a phase of Christianity thus developed there should be utter disregard of the necessity to provide for this want of human nature, in whose satisfaction there is such large opportunity for sin. It was perhaps itself the parent of the Revolution, but in its development became the child of that it had begotten. The character of Christian is identified with that of patriot ; opposition to the King of England and to the Prince of Evil are one and the same thing, and the badge of the one enmity must be as arbitrary and as manifest as that of the other. Recreation ! What is needed more than the Sermon of some ranting enthu-

siast? Amusement? There is nor time nor place for such; for was it not the very occupation of the enemy of the Lord's people, and does not the Scripture say—that very Scripture whose every word is of divine inspiration, and hence of universal and eternal application—"Is any merry, let him sing psalms"? And the stern logic which, in its outworking of dogmatic system, does not shrink from the assertion of the eternal damnation of new-born infants, as blindly and mercilessly would ignore the nature of the race which Jesus came to redeem, the nature which the Father gave; would uproot desires and faculties which He did implant, because their gratification and development, they have determined, cannot be without sin. The result we behold in each department the same: the soul, which is conscious of the Divine Paternity, revolting against the ascription of merciless cruelty to the Father, and the assertion of the consequent necessity for divine sacrifice; and, longing for a complete human manifestation of God's fatherhood, will have Jesus to be only Son of man.

And so as to dogma, Unitarianism is the offspring of Puritanism. And the nature which believes itself God-given, and therefore that for all its parts there must be possible development and satisfaction without sin, and agreeably to the Father's will, it tears in pieces these decrees against amusement which Puritan Apostles have given it to keep, and all distinction between the Church and the World in this respect is taken away ; and Puritanism begets Lawlessness.

So also in the inception of the great Methodist movement in America, there was a perhaps natural unmindfulness of the fact that man is not a purely spiritual being, and that the whole man is to be redeemed, and that by the Spirit of Christ, his whole life is to be purified, and not a part of that life destroyed. Perhaps if we take into consideration the fact that Wesley never designed to build a Church, but only to constitute a Society for the pursuit of holiness within the bounds of the Ancient Church whereof he was Minister, we may feel less surprised that his wisdom made no provision

in this regard. But as the great work went on —the work of preaching the Gospel to men who, though Christians, had never heard it; the work of quickening by the Word the new life into holiness—in this great spiritual revolution there was naturally the same peculiar manifestation as in that wherein the weapons of a so-called spiritual warfare were carnal. The peculiar dress proclaimed the regenerate, the tone of voice revealed the tone of mind, and distinctions just as arbitrary in the matter of social merry-making and popular amusement were made to separate between the people who would serve God by "method" and those who saw no visions and dreamed no dreams; those to whom the ecstasy of joyful deliverance in the moment when the crucified Saviour was revealed, was not a tangible experience to be located in time and place and circumstance. Let us remark here that in those days and in those circumstances such distinctions were perhaps natural, and certainly that such peculiarity of life was possible of maintenance. The very idiosyncrasies of their conduct were a pleasing

excitement in their display ; the Class-meeting and the Love-feast were spiritual merry-makings where tragic depiction of wrestling combat with the Evil One gave satisfaction to the dramatic instinct of speaker and hearer, and where poverty and ignorance found their social exchange. To-day, at the great centres of population, in the cities where wealth and consequent culture and refinement are gathered, you shall look in vain for aught more than nominal continuance of these their ancient peculiarities of method : even as they now worship in houses of architectural splendor, even as the wisest of their leaders are grown chary of the employment of the mourner's bench, even as their preaching is no longer the unchanging cry to "flee from the wrath to come," even as the system of itinerancy is so modified that their pastorships are as "settled" as ours, and many are asking for Diocesan Episcopacy. Just so their merely arbitrary distinctions as to popular and social amusements are broken down, and the disciples of Wesley are not now more particular in this regard than other Christians.

I have spoken of these movements, because in them I find the origin in chief of the arbitrary distinctions largely confined to American Christians ; because we of one school in the old historic Church have been most largely influenced by their traditions, and because with us, as with them, these arbitrary distinctions remain enshrined in the loving memory of men and women of the generation passing away, and yet have no power with those who come after us, and, as I believe, are most fruitful source of the lawlessness over which we grieve.

As I have said, I can understand, it seems to me, that such badges of loyalty were natural, were perhaps wise, in the day, and in the furious struggle of the day, of their devising. But if the danger to the kingdom and cause of Christ be as great or greater to-day, still so has changed the conviction of men as to its character that they will not wear a mere cockade of loyalty to testify their devotion to the king's throne. They are not willing to be shut up within imaginary lines of demarkation, by the authority of their leaders, when they can them-

selves see that other territory, around which no line of prohibition is drawn, is to the full as dangerous as that from which they are forbidden. More than this, and most important of all, the very unreality of the distinction made serves but to destroy the value of their teacher's wisdom, and to justify disregard of all that he ordains, even in cases where a doubtful conscience adds its timid suggestion to the Church's expressed warning, or rather to the traditional opinion of the Christian world.

I say, "rather to the traditional opinion of the Christian world"; for speaking as I am especially with reference to the dangers and duties of our own Church, I must here again express my satisfaction that on the statute-book of the Church are found no enactments against particular transgressions, other than those plainly laid down in Holy Scripture. I believe that her wisdom is shown here in following the example of that Holy Scripture, in the inculcation of principles rather than of precepts, in the effort to develop self-determining manhood rather than to essay the continu-

ance of a childhood to be directed and guided at its every step. But more of this by and by. Now I would emphasize the arbitrariness of these moral differences made by Christian people, and the absurdity—yes, absurdity—of some of them. In retreating from the position on this subject once held, the march has been unequal at different points of the line, so that now the front presented is zigzag and defenceless. At one point we are come back to an eminence unassailable, plainly pointed out upon the chart of battle given us so long ago; but far in front of it, on the right hand or the left, are still huddled a handful of fearful men, who in honest loyalty to that they believe, cannot surrender the place, though low and marshy and easy of assault; who cannot see that the true line of defence is behind them, even that natural boundary whereof the rocky height is part. Alas! the danger is that by and by, driven thence by a force they cannot resist, they shall in utter demoralization throw away their arms and give up the contest. If they cannot maintain the point where their fathers

stood, then is there nothing worthy of defence or of struggle : let it all go.

To drop all figure and speak with perfect plainness, I believe that the indiscriminate condemnation of one whole class of amusements and the indiscriminate approval of another has produced the effect, upon the mass of Christian people, to destroy the value of all such judgment. Of the class condemned they can find particular specimens that are good and helpful, as of the class approved they can find specimens that are bad and hurtful, and the distinction is proven vain, and equally vain all of like character.

For example, we no longer hear outcry made against the reading of fictitious literature, and on the Library-table of almost every Christian home in this city will be found the latest products of our teeming press, any one of which had been perhaps an "unclean thing" in the judgment of the earnest Christian an hundred years ago, which he must "touch not" lest he be defiled. To-day a wise Christian father or mother will be careful that the purity of son or

daughter be not sullied by the perusal of pages which can bring only defilement with guilty knowledge ; but recognizing fully that much, perhaps even the larger part, of contemporary fictitious literature is an unclean thing, not to be touched or tasted or handled save with certain damage, yet to secure immunity from this hurt we do not in puritanic wrath burn all such writings in our social market-place. On the contrary, the young man and maiden are bidden and urged to study the masterpieces of the literary artists of the old time, and to find recreation and delight in the poem, the novel, the drama of to-day ; for not only are they esteemed to be legitimate sources of purest mental recreation, but as works of art they stimulate and cultivate in us the God-given appreciation of the beautiful.

More than this ; because we have learned that in the mirror held up to nature, ignorance and immaturity can best learn the lessons that life in its multiform variety is fitted to impart ; because we have learned also that the art of fictitious portraiture is a blessing to

men ; and because in its faithful rendering of the good and the evil, in their natural commingling, is its power to give help and to give pleasure, we consent that vice must be pictured in the story—vice even sometimes triumphant—and that the danger of defilement begins only with the false representation, when the results of vicious living are concealed, and its joys exaggerated. Discrimination must select the true from the false, the impure from the clean. Alas ! though we have learned its necessary use in this particular department, we are sadly derelict in the performance of our duty, and perhaps to-day there is no more fruitful cause of moral degeneracy than the fictitious literature which feeds the minds of our boys and girls.

But, mark, I pray you, that now all Christians acknowledge that there is pure and healthful fictitious literature, both in prose and verse ; all acknowledge that there is a proper place for it in our Christian society, even acknowledge that it is a mighty power for blessing and for cursing, so that we seek to employ

it for purpose of propagating the truth, religious, ecclesiastical, or even political, which we value most.

Further, we cheerfully admit that the hearing one Artist interpret what another Artist has created is added delight which cannot be forbidden on any true Christian ground ; and so Clergy and Laity may go hand in hand to the Concert hall, where, without the assistance of costume and scenery, the Prima Donna shall sing for us the strains which have floated in upon the rapt soul of the musician, or the Tragedian without his buskin shall make us understand what the seer has beheld of the intricate workings of that mysterious thing, a human heart.

I remember that a great Tragedian, once visiting a neighboring city, received request from the members of the Young Men's Christian Association, that for their benefit and entertainment he would come to their hall and give them a Shakespearian reading. I remember that his answer came back, that it could not be proper for them to hear him read, while

sitting in a chair, the words which they deemed it all unlawful to listen to, if he should speak them while dressed to represent the character, and standing amid the mimic scene designed to heighten the effect, by rendering the illusion more complete. I could not help admiring the man for his rebuke to the Christian inconsistency which would thus emphasize a distinction without a difference.

Are you wondering, my Christian friends, that I can speak such words? And are you writing me down in your judgment as the advocate of the Theatre? I know the risk I am running of being misunderstood; I know full well the danger to which I am exposing my Christian reputation; but I must speak, for I believe that by nothing more than by these unreal, arbitrary, often absurd distinctions, is the cause of Christ being hindered in our country.

The Theatre is to-day, I believe, degraded into a very high school of vice; the dramas which are put upon the boards are in general, I believe, suggestive pictures of licentious life; the wit is pointed only by its coarseness, the

plot is an intrigue, and its incidents selected for the sake of their lewd piquancy; while but too often wit and plot and incident are altogether nothing but an opportunity for the exhibition of shameless nakedness; and Christian people of every name, young and old, rich and poor, all alike are its patrons.

This the fact, the melancholy fact, which compels the Christian teacher to seek its explanation, to break down if he may the scaffolding of unreal distinctions, builded by Christian sentiment, which protects the indiscriminate patronage, and to seek a remedy in urging that we more fully recognize that the peculiarity of the disciples of Christ is redemption from *all* iniquity, and purification unto zeal for good works.

I say that there is a faculty implanted in our nature which demands exercise in the recreation of its jaded companions; that amusement is as necessary as labor, to the well-being and health of body, mind, and spirit; and I say that because this is true, therefore the exercise of this faculty, the satisfying of this hunger,

must be possible without sin. Further, I find that the representation of nature by art, be that art musical, pictorial, literary, or dramatic, does offer fullest opportunity for this faculty to be developed into healthy activity, does offer most satisfying food to this hunger. The doll in the nursery, the snow-man on the playground, the merry singing of a group of boys and girls, the masqueradings and the dramas of childhood, equally with the juvenile books which are such entrancing joy,—all testify to the reality of the need I find in men, and of the natural satisfaction it seeks.

The writer's ready pen is no longer forbidden to bring to my child happy companions and gleeful sports from an unseen child-world ; the Christian is no longer forbidden to laugh and weep with the joys and sorrows of the creatures born of the genius whose dead body the great Abbey enshrines ; nay, I may even go, as I have said, to see the Artist tear the wrappings off, that I may behold the hidden wonders of Art, whereof before I had no conception, if only the helpful accompaniment

that Artist would fain employ, and does employ on other occasion, be absent. Is this natural? Grant that vice reigns supreme in the Play-house; does it not as really control the Press whence issue the works of fiction? Are actors and actresses, in drama and opera, men and women of evil life, who should not be countenanced or encouraged? Is it less encouragement to give them our countenance at the Concert or the Reading? Above all, ought we to surrender this mighty engine for instruction and delight into hands that will use it only to degrade? May there not be, should there not be, a discrimination possible, which by its very wisdom and reason will commend itself to the mind and heart of the great multitude of Christians who are now utterly unmindful of any such obligation, and who go to laugh at the coarse obscenities of the comic opera, as they go to behold the most splendid realization of most splendid poetic conception?

One other example I will give of like unmeaning distinction productive of like abandonment of all distinctions by the people. The

rattling dice are heard in many a Christian parlor, and the dull routine of backgammon whiles away many an evening in homes where a card would be looked upon as the very banner of the Prince of all evil, from which children should be bidden to flee, and which the fire on the hearth should quickly consume. The dominoes afford amusement to the gathered company, with perfect Christian propriety, but if the same numbers be printed on cardboard instead of ivory, then the same combinations, which were just now harmless, become most dangerous. Substitute letters of the alphabet for the traditional characters on the cards, and the game becomes innocent which before was evil, though the principles of the two are identical. And yet a moment's reflection would serve to convince us that, as the implement of the gambler, the dice-box is as frequent and as enticing as the card-table, and that in some grades of society, even in America, the game of dominoes is the most usual occasion of the hopes and fears of the gambler ; and that dice and dominoes may be and are as real

provocation as cards, of the covetous lust for gain, and of the angry despair of loss, which blacken and foul the divine image in which he was created. So that in this particular instance, not even the argument from natural or necessary tendency may be adduced as justification of the arbitrary selection ; whereas the stigma placed upon the one pastime, while the other and the similar escapes our ban, does but serve, and serve inevitably, to vacate the power of our judgment in *all* such matters, and to suggest that it is but an unreasoning traditional objection which forbids the wager upon the result of any game, though that finds certain warrant in the prohibition of the Master Himself of the "covetousness which is idolatry."

These examples may suffice to illustrate the position I would maintain, that unreal moral distinctions are fruitful cause of the disregard of all, even those most real. But I cannot fail to mention one other, belonging to wholly different category, itself perhaps a result, and not a cause, of the indiscriminate conformity of Christians to the world's customs, but just

as utterly without foundation as the others, and effectual, like them, to continue this moral chaos from which it came. I mean the distinction, which is everywhere recognized, as to the different moral duty of Clergy and Laity in this respect. I feel confident that a large proportion of the Christian men and women to whom I am speaking to-night would consider it quite within the limits of their Christian liberty to attend the representation of some world-renowned drama by an artist of fame as wide. I will take for granted, as I can but hope I am justified in doing, that but few of my auditors would not be careful as to the character of the performance to which they would lend their presence; yet how amazed and sorrowful would they be to see their Clergyman enter to enjoy that which they consider perfectly allowed to themselves without self-condemnation! And is not their feeling of surprise and of sorrow wholly without excuse, if indeed their own presence may not be questioned? Is there different moral rule laid down in Holy Scripture for Clergy and Laity? Are the Ministers of Christ

aught more than a part of that "peculiar people," though they be their leaders and guides, *all* of whom equally, St. Paul writes to Titus, Christ would redeem from all iniquity and purify unto Himself?

Now be it understood that I, as a public religious teacher, may abstain from this or that of self-indulgence for manifold reasons of expediency, and with greatest propriety. Indeed I think the Minister of Christ worthy of only contempt who, whatever he may think of the moral tendency of any offered entertainment, shall selfishly refuse to abstain from it, if there be reasonable probability that by his refusal he shall place in the Christian pathway a stone of stumbling against whose sharp sides ignorance or recklessness may be wounded to death or to desertion of the race. But, on the other hand, this principle must have its limitations in its application to each particular case, lest our Christian liberty be placed in the power of every morbid conscience in the community; and still more, for me to abstain from that which is in my judgment sinless, on the allowed

ground that it is sinful, is falsehood as real as were my assertion by my action, of my belief in the sinlessness of what in reality I believe to be sinful.

But more than this, and most important of all in the discussion with which we are now engaged, such arbitrary division of the teacher from the taught tends surely to lower the standard of excellence for the disciples' endeavor, and to make him content with lower attainment; and it tends as well to inculcate the falsehood of a vicarious performance of personal duty, which is so full of danger because it is so full of pleasing satisfaction to the human heart.

The Clergy, we all say, must set an example to the People. Yes, but example for what—to be admired or to be imitated? Manifestly, only the latter, if what is sinful — mark you, not merely inexpedient, but sinful—in the Minister is sinless in those to whom he ministers. And yet, just as manifestly, such is the theory prevalent to-day. The dance may go on, the joy be unconfined, now that the Minister is

gone from the wedding-feast ; but the conversation grows more restrained at his approach, and youth is silent and reserved, as though in the unwelcome presence of a policeman come to search for offenders against the law, and to secure their punishment, rather than of the elder brother come to share their joy, as he will come to share their sorrow when the feasting has been changed to mourning.

I believe that this enforced separation of the Clergy from their People in the hours of recreation is a mighty evil ; I believe that it tends to prevent that fullest confidence and sympathy which alone can enable them to be fullest help to those who need help ; and, more than all, that it tends directly to lower the tone of social merry-making and public entertainment, both in removing the restraint which age and wisdom and feeling of responsibility would impose, and in searing the conscience of Christian disciple with hot burning recollection that he is taking part in that which he himself would be ashamed to see his Minister enjoy.

Certainly, the pastor must go before his

flock ; certainly, the teacher must have made greater attainment than his pupils ; certainly, he who would point the wayfarer to heaven must lead the way. More than this : let us be sorry for the man who, busy day after day in ministering Christ's pardon to the penitent and Christ's consolation to the sorrowing ; who, kneeling often by the bedside of pain, and breaking the bread of hope in the chamber of despairing fear, is yet ever longing for the glare of the ball-room and the play-house — for the follies of the society of which he must be a part. He has a great work to do, and cannot come down ; and yet he must come down as a man among men, to be partner in all their life in its every manifestation, if he shall do that great work.

"The way to make indifferent things wrong," says George Macdonald, "is for good people to stop doing them" ; and well will it be for the Church when it shall be fully recognized that what is lawful for People is lawful for Priest, and that what the Priest may not do because it is sinful, his People too must forego.

But I can hear already the reproachful question, in answer to all that I have been saying, "Shall there not be a line of separation between the Church and the World? Shall there not be badges of abstinence and of performance, whereby they may be recognized who have named the precious name, and have sworn the sacrament of allegiance?" And I answer, Yes, a line, but not an imaginary one, to be determined only by measured reference to fixed points far distant, but a line of division deep and wide as between life and death, natural and necessary, the outworking, individual and peculiar, of the indwelling Spirit of Jesus, to Whom has been surrendered the will. No such real difference can distinguish the officers from the host, for both classes are alike saved, and alike bound, by the same act of surrender and confession; they are distinguished but in relative position, and their conduct to be differentiated by considerations only of expediency and not of absolute morality.

But shall these matters of Christian conduct be left to the determination of the individual

Christian disciple, and shall not rather the Church, in discharge of her bounden duty "to edify the saints," lay down rules of conduct for men's guidance? Shall she not station the sentinels of anathema and excommunication over against the enticing resorts of pleasure, to warn away the infatuated, and to arrest and discipline the offender?

I answer, search the Holy Book, and see that in it there are no rules containing specific injunction or prohibition, but that, on the contrary, everywhere we read the enunciation of great broad principles of conduct and of duty, which all rest upon the one supreme motive of loyalty to the personal Christ, and are all made applicable by the promised assistance of His Spirit. The delectable mountains of holiness are shown to the pilgrim, and toward their heights he is bidden to turn his eager feet; but these heights stand forth in vague and undefined magnificence, and the encircling hills of little duties and little denials are not described; the aspiration for the summit must be guide sufficient for their surmounting. See

the great Apostle says : " Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, . . . think on these things." These stand out boldly as goals of our endeavor ; yet behind them we can see still loftier elevation : " Charity [which] beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Still farther distant, still higher summit, we behold : " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy mind ; and thy neighbor as thyself." And, lifted above all, amid the clouds and darkness which are round about Him, we are shown the glowing perfection to which we must come : " Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

And so, on the other hand, we hear of the works of the flesh which are the denial of the presence of the Spirit, and so the proof that though there has been confession of the mouth, there has been no belief with the heart in Him

Who was raised from the dead. Impurity and falsehood, injustice and hate: these are evidence of subjection to the Evil One, whom the Christ would destroy. Therefore, against them, all of them, in their every possible phase, the believer in Jesus will struggle, *must* struggle, because the Spirit who dwelleth in him lusteth against the flesh.

But have you not observed that the Apostles and the Lord never specify particular provocations to sin to be avoided, never lay their hands on any particular temptations to transgression, and cry aloud against them? And yet we know that the world of their day offered just as enticing invitation to the Christian as the world of our own time, and that society—best society as we might call it—was more corrupt, perhaps, than ever before or since.

At the games in whose wrestling and running contests St. Paul finds the illustration of the Christian life, which he employs in his letter to the Corinthians, he seems to take for granted their frequent attendance and participation; and yet, notoriously, every incitement to

vicious indulgence was there offered. It seems to me, then, that the wisdom of the Church of to-day is to follow this example of refusal to stigmatize as forbidden, anything other than that which is in itself plain violation of the moral law to which God bears witness in conscience and in Scripture. I do not believe that St. Paul designed to give complete catalogue of all possible works of the flesh when he wrote the list for the Galatians ; on the contrary, I believe that the enemy will change his bait to suit the changed habit and appetite of the prize he would secure. I believe that, of necessity, the dangers of our age of luxury and refinement must be wholly different from those which environed our forefathers, and hence that there will be ever new occasion again and again, as the years pass by, that the Church, the ever-living Apostle and Guide, shall by her Ministers cry aloud to tell of the new dangers to which her children are exposed, and to warn that they be avoided. But this very duty involves that she see and admit that the old-time dangers may be no longer so full of peril ; that because

of the changed condition in thought and habit of life the old-time distinctions may be no longer insisted upon ; and I repeat again, that the failure to make this admission must weaken if it does not destroy the value of the teacher's judgment with his pupil.

More than this : I urge that in the performance of this duty the modern Church shall imitate the Apostolic wisdom and refrain from all legislation as to particulars, and that the representatives of the Church in their application of principles to individual cases shall refrain from indiscriminate condemnation and indiscriminate approval ; but in ministering "ghostly counsel and advice" shall have fullest regard to differences of temperament and of development, to habits of mind and of body, and that in all such ministrations the aim be kept steadily in view to develop a self-determining Christian manhood, and not to be the director of a childhood which shall never end ; and, above all, that we fail not to constantly set forth that the indwelling of Christ is salvation, and that if Christ be in us "the hope of glory," He *must*

bring every thought and desire into subjection, and that such increasing subjection is the alone assurance of the salvation we seek.

Has not the disposition of Christian people and Christian teachers been rather in this particular to set up a Procrustean bed of iron conformity, on which every temperament and disposition must be stretched, no matter for radical differences of stature? Have we not rather sought to furnish Christian people, in respect to the matter of which I speak, a patent medicine equally curative of all disorders, equally indicated as remedy by every symptom of disease, and to make the one prescription an universal pharmacopeia? Have we not failed to remember that, in the spiritual nature as the physical, there are for different individuals varying needs and varying dangers, demanding varying food and varying medicine? I can take as food, with pleasure and with safety, many things which to my friend and companion, even my closest of kin, may be deadly: shall it be otherwise with the spiritual nature? And shall it not be probably true that a pursuit,

be it of business or of pleasure, which is harmless, or even helpful to me, shall cause lethargy and death if persisted in by him? And then, too, may we not expect to meet spiritual dyspeptics, who are by their very condition made to be dietary propagandists, who will insist that only that is safe for anybody which they have found their morbid powers can comfortably manage?

But just as certainly, to carry out our analogy, there are spiritual poisons, which bring death to the new life from Jesus, wheresoever it has been quickened. Let the nature, material and visible, be our guide in dealing with that which is spiritual and invisible: it is the work of the same Creator, and teaches us that wise discrimination must decide what is healthful for the individual soul; that the Father and Brethren must write "Poison" in large letters upon that which the universal experience has proven to be hurtful to all; but with reference to all else, that advice shall invite the adult to the practice of approved regimen, and authority compel its adoption by the child.

Further, let us remember that only advice is possible for the full-grown man, and that there be no failure to recognize maturity and its personal responsibility when they are come ; and further still, that our advice be not made nugatory by being so indiscriminate that he who asks it can discover flaw by his own experimental investigation.

The question then presents itself to the intelligent Christian faith of to-day, What shall be done to protect the disciples of Jesus from the influences on every hand which are opposing the accomplishment of His desire and purpose, to purify them into a peculiar people, redeemed from all iniquity, and zealous for good works ? These influences are so manifold, and confessedly, by them, so large a proportion of our young men and women are being dwarfed in their spiritual stature ; for the bonds of iniquity are by their means enabled still to restrain the growing limbs, and the exercise of doing good works is made impossible by the very preoccupation of the mind and heart with these welcomed visitors. Shall we seek to

close the doors against all visitors who are not come expressly to help the deliverance from sin, the new creation unto holiness? Shall we seek to continue the old plan of denying the lawfulness of the natural desires, and of refusing to suffer any answer to be made to their calling, because we have decided that calling to be only the disobedient outcry of a child commanded to be silent? Shall we seek to resurrect a dead Puritanism, or to breathe a new life into the Methodist asceticism, which is confessedly old and dying, if not dead? As easy it were to compel that all Christians shall dwell to-day in the log-hut of the frontiersman, in the carpetless cold and comfortless simplicity of the early days in America, as to refuse to wealthy leisure its dilettante occupation in the study of the works of art which its riches can buy and its culture enjoy; or to make men and women believe evil the excitement of the social assembly where youth and beauty "chase the hours with flying feet." These things were exhibitions of worldliness, essential worldliness, to the mind and heart of our ancestors, and are

still, in the judgment of many who hold on to the ideas of their grandfathers, whereas they are but the gratification of the natural tastes of human nature, that human nature everywhere and always the same, which found expression then in other forms, perhaps just as liable to be perverted to sin.

Nay, Christianity would not, cannot destroy human nature, and it were an evil thing to do if it could ; but it can and must control it, if it be of any value—control it in redeeming it from all iniquity, and in purifying it into zeal for good works. How, then, may we assist its attainment of this control ? I answer, first and chief, not by lopping off the outer branches of mere doubtful morality, but by cutting down the tree whereon they grow, even the merely external acceptance of Christ's religion, the unreal union with Him. How shall we remedy this diseased condition of the Church of today ? I answer, By the intensification of the conception of the living Christ, and of union with Him in honest self-surrender ; for this and this only can effect the separation from all in-

iquity, and the zealous endeavor after all good works. I answer, that it must be done not by legislative enactment against particular self-indulgence, not by the anathema of repulsion hurled by Priestly hands against joyous, light-hearted youth because it has joined in this or that gayety ; surely not by indiscriminate condemnation of the traditionally accepted "worldliness," but by the making more real to those over whose departure we are grieving, that to be a Christian is to have Jesus Christ as the very centre and source of our life.

Let us seek to teach them, ever more and more plainly, that not orthodoxy, but loyal love, is salvation ; that the expression of that loyal love may have very varying shape, and that no routine of ritual can give assured help to our weakness or be guarantee of salvation ; and that if the Christ be ours, and we be His, that He will teach each one of us what we must do and what we must avoid, and that on our loyal and willing effort to do His will depends all our hope. Yes, that our redemption from all iniquity is His will, and that we are false to Him,

and separate ourselves from Him, whensoever we allow ourselves in the omission of what He commands us, or the commission of that which He by His Spirit, by His Church, by His Word, teaches us to be fraught with evil.

I say further, let us strive to make men realize more and more the dealing, the promised dealing of Jesus Christ with the individual believer, that by our murmuring complaint of a brother's behavior he may not be provoked to more reckless assertion of his freedom, and excited to angry dissatisfaction with our self-appointed censorship. Let us seek to recognize that possibly our brethren are walking with unsoiled robes through places where ours would most surely be all bedraggled and made unfit for the King's house. And let us recognize that the distinctions we have inherited from those who went before us may be, many of them, now without value, and cannot be maintained, and that the effort to maintain them is to drive men away from us as guides whose counsel they will not accept.

We will insist that separation from *all* sin,

from all that tends directly and inevitably to sinful desire and sinful habit, must be the rule for all, Clergy and Laity, young and old, rich and poor. But we will admit that for different natures there may be unequal danger in the same thing, and we will admit that for all there may be safety in some instances of a class generally dangerous, even as there is defilement in the use of many particular specimens of a class in general considered safe.

We will make distinctions, honest and real, and not fanciful, arbitrary, and often absurd. So we will seek to gain the confidence of the men of to-day, that by our counsel they may learn the obligation, the necessity to make such distinctions for themselves, and in the matter of amusement, as of all else in their life, to seek the honor of Christ.

Finally, let me say that leading men thus slowly and gradually, by steps which they can understand, and whose need they can appreciate, we may hope to bring them in the development of their highest nature to find their recreation in spiritual exercise, and to be

more and more free from the longing for mere amusement, even though it be sinless. Yes, "earthly pleasures fade away when Jesus is revealed"; but the full revelation of the "opening day," which alone can conceal the stars, cannot be accomplished or be hastened by the denial of the reality of the starlight; and certainly it cannot be effected by the foolish failure to distinguish between the glorious sheen of those splendid fires and the feeble glimmering of a sputtering candle, though it be true that both alike are extinguished by the sunshine.

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